

4.7 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The purpose of this section is to provide an analysis of the Project's consistency with policies and regulations set forth in adopted and accepted plans that are applicable to development within the Town of Mammoth Lakes. In addition to planning purposes, the provisions set forth in these plans and regulations have been adopted for the purpose of eliminating or reducing potential land use impacts resulting from development within the Town's jurisdictional boundaries. Policies set forth in the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan (adopted 2007), including Neighborhood and District Character, Land Use, and Mobility Elements, are pertinent to the Project. In addition, other plans that were adopted or accepted in the implementation of the General Plan are also evaluated. These include the Pedestrian Master Plan (adopted April 16, 2014), General Bikeway Master Plan (adopted April 16, 2014), and the Trails System Master Plan (adopted October 19, 2011). The Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, Title 17 (Zoning Code) is also applicable to the land use analysis.

The discussion below addresses the relationship between the Project and land use regulations. Other sections of this Draft EIR evaluate the physical environmental effects that would result from the proposed amendments of the General Plan, adoption of the Mobility Element Update, and changes in the Zoning Code. For example, Sections 4.2, Air Quality, 4.4, Biological Resources, 4.11, Transportation and Traffic, and 4.12 Utilities and Service Systems, address the impacts to air quality from the proposed changes, potential effects on the natural environment, such as vegetation and species, the capacities of the Town's streets to accommodate the change, and potential impacts to utilities and service systems, respectively.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

a. Regulatory Framework

(1) State of California

State law requires that each city and county in California prepare a comprehensive, long term general plan to guide its future. The State Legislature declared in 1976 that "decisions involving the future growth of the state, most of which are made and will continue to be made at the local level, would be guided by an effective planning process, including the local general plan, and would proceed within the framework of officially approved statewide goals and policies." To assist local governments in meeting this responsibility, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research is required to adopt and periodically revise guidelines for the preparation and content of local general plans (Government Code §65040.2). Under the state's current *General Plan Guidelines* (2003), every general plan must provide policies for seven elements: Land Use, Circulation, Conservation, Housing, Noise, Open Space and Safety.¹ Chapter 3 of the *General Plan Guidelines* provides direction in the amendment of the General Plan and describes the need to determine the amount and location of future uses based on the capacity of the physical infrastructure (i.e., schools, roads, sewer trunk lines, drainage systems, utilities, etc.). Respectively, the *General Plan Guidelines* recommends that current and Projected capacities of such systems identify available opportunities for development as well as

¹ *State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines, 2003, page 48.*

potential constraints.² Another component of the *General Plan Guidelines* is the requirement of public participation in long-range planning. This may involve workshops, panel discussions, neighborhood meetings, public hearings, and Town Hall meetings.³ Under the *General Plan Guidelines*, zoning, which classifies the specific, immediate uses of land, is considered a primary means of implementing a general plan. According to the state's General Plan Guidelines, the success of the general plan is considered to rely on the effectiveness of a consistent zoning ordinance that translates the long-term objectives and policies contained in the plan. In 2010, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research updated the circulation and mobility component of the General Plan Guidelines. This document, *Update to the General Plan Guidelines: Complete Streets and the Circulation Element* (December 15, 2010) emphasized "complete streets" and multimodal transportation networks in the development of General Plan mobility and circulation elements.

(2) Town of Mammoth Lakes

(a) General Plan

The Town of Mammoth General Plan sets forth policies that protect residents' quality of life, protect the environment, and recognize the uniqueness of the Town's natural surroundings. The General Plan establishes standards, guidelines, and priorities that promote a thriving, sustainable community. The General Plan elements most applicable to the Project are the Neighborhood and District Character Element, the Land Use Element, and the Mobility Element. The Neighborhood and District Character Element provides a basis for the establishment of unique districts throughout the Town and identifies twelve districts, including the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road districts, which warrant special study. This Element also describes and provides specific design and development recommendations for the various districts. In this respect, the ensuing district plans that were developed by the Town subsequent to the adoption of the 2007 General Plan, and that are applicable to the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road areas, are components of the Neighborhood and District Character Element. The Land Use Element sets forth specific policies containing a (i) goal, (ii) policy, and (iii) action that would support the recommendations set forth in the Neighborhood and District Character Element. As stated in the Land Use Element, the "overarching principal of the community is to maintain the Town's compact urban form, protect natural and outdoor recreation resources, and to prevent urban sprawl."⁴ The purpose of the Mobility Element is to provide a series of goals and policies that would "achieve a multi-modal transportation system."⁵

(i) Neighborhood and District Character Element

The Neighborhood and District Character Element of the General Plan identifies districts and special study areas. The intent of the Element is to enhance the unique character of Mammoth Lakes and provide careful planning of districts and individual sites. The Neighborhood and District Character Element identifies twelve districts and four mountain portals. District boundaries are based on the 1987 General Plan Planning Districts and are defined by existing development, patterns of vegetation, topographic features, circulation patterns, and the pattern and relationships of land uses. District 1 is identified as Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest. According to the Neighborhood and District Character Element, this area should invite pedestrian activity and provide gathering places for interaction with a vibrant mix of retail, commercial, and

² *State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Op. Cit., page 40.*

³ *State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Op. Cit., Chapter 8.*

⁴ *Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan, page 30.*

⁵ *Town of Mammoth Lakes, Op. Cit., page 38.*

workforce housing. Uses would be mixed to allow offices, residential housing and visitor accommodations above ground floor retail. New development would improve connectivity and circulation with bike and pedestrian paths, sidewalks and roads. General characteristics, which are objectives for future planning, intended for the community, as listed under the Neighborhood and District Character Element, include the following:

1. Maintain views of the Sherwin Range, the Knolls and Mammoth Mountain from public spaces
2. Landscaping reinforces Eastern Sierra native pine, fir, aspen, ground cover and wildflowers
3. Landscaping establishes scale and street edge
4. Pedestrian-oriented sidewalk/boardwalk with public art, centrally located parks, plazas, courtyards and pedestrian links that create a sense of exploration
5. Walk-to neighborhood or community parks in all districts
6. Mid-block pedestrian access
7. Occasional small plazas and courts visible from the public way that can be used as public event venues
8. Active day and evening and through all four seasons
9. Retail and services in storefront setting, located next to the sidewalk
10. District animation with retail oriented to the street
11. Higher lot coverage may be acceptable with pockets of effective landscaping and open space
12. Encourage transit-oriented development
13. Strip mall development pattern shifted to a pattern of commercial in front and parking in back
14. Convenient structured parking and small-scale surface parking
15. Shared and pooled parking
16. Alley and side street access for deliveries, service and emergency access and pedestrian connections appropriate to district character.

Characteristics specific to Main Street include a grand boulevard, multiple safe pedestrian crossings from north to south side of Main Street, and reduction or elimination of frontage roads. Main Street characteristics are also expected to create distinct and unique areas with a vibrant mix of retail, commercial and workforce housing, smooth transition and connectivity from commercial to commercial and other features. Old Mammoth Road characteristics are expected to be traditional small-scale mixed use “main street” development pattern.

District Plans

Under the guidance of the General Plan's Neighborhood and District Character Element, the Town of Mammoth Lakes Council accepted several district plans for areas comprising the Town's commercially-zoned neighborhoods. These include the Neighborhood District Planning: Concepts and Strategies (accepted August 3, 2011), Downtown Neighborhood District Plan (DNDP), the North Old Mammoth Road District (NOMRDSS) Special Study (accepted June 3, 2008), and the South Districts Neighborhood District Planning Study (SDNDP) (accepted August 3, 2011).

Downtown Neighborhood District Plan: The DNDP addresses land use for Main Street and parts of North Old Mammoth Road. The preferred concept is a thriving mixed use district focused around these streets. Under the DNDP, Main Street would be reconfigured to eliminate the existing frontage roads and future buildings would be oriented toward and located close to the street. A substantial median, potentially used as a right-of-way for a gondola, would break up Main Street's four lanes of traffic, and provide a site for streetscape features. Sidewalks and storefronts would provide opportunities for browsing a range of retail shops and restaurants. Parking would be well organized and located in public and private parking lots and surface and underground structures, and on-street. Snow removal would be efficiently managed to maintain visibility of storefronts and allow for year-round pedestrian use of sidewalks and paths. An active and pedestrian-friendly environment is encouraged through creation of public spaces like small plazas, as well as inclusion of development standards that allow for outdoor dining and street vendors. Designated primary and secondary retail streets include Main Street from Sierra Park Road to Manzanita Road, North Old Mammoth Road, Tavern Road and parts of Laurel Mountain Road. Secondary retail streets would be located on the periphery of the downtown, and would provide a transition to residential and lodging areas. Certain site conditions, such as topography, may preclude some of these properties from being designed to function as part of a traditional pedestrian oriented retail street. The objective is to create a scale and character more typical of a traditional downtown.

North Old Mammoth Road District Plan Special Study: The goal of the NOMRDSS is to create a walkable community, to reduce dependency on the automobile, and to reinforce the existing North Mammoth Road District commercial area as a desirable place for residents as well as visitors. The North Old Mammoth Road District is considered the likely location for much of the future development activity within the Town because of its central location, existing infrastructure, available transit; and commercial zoning (which allows mixed use). The area would remain as a mixed-use district, similar to a small town center, with residential and lodging to support retail, commercial, and supporting businesses. Within the NOMRDSS, some of existing uses such as condominiums are expected to remain permanently. Other uses may remain over time but also have the potential to change. New residential and lodging units are assumed to be on the floors above the ground-floor retail, and at-grade along Laurel Mountain Road. Recommended development would result in a building or clusters of buildings that support the pedestrian environment.

South Districts Neighborhood District Planning Study: The SDNDP Study includes the South Old Mammoth Road commercial district. Key issues in this area include the preponderance of strip commercial and the lack of a functional and well-connected pedestrian environment. Land use and development standards for South Old Mammoth Road and Mammoth Creek Park under the SDNDP include zoning standards that allow for mixed use development (ground floor retail with office or residential above), mixed use lodging/residential, and mixed use retail/office. New development would be oriented to pedestrians and well-connected sidewalks and convenient street crossings would be provided. Street-front retail would be located along Old Mammoth Road. Improvements would be provided through infill properties and upgraded and retro-fitted

existing shopping centers. Parking would be a combination of on-street, off-street, and shared parking facilities. Building massing would be organized to bring properties to the street edge, while including more generous upper-story setbacks that protect views to the Sherwin Range. “Feet-first” infrastructure such as multi-use paths and sidewalks would be continuous throughout the district. Transit would be encouraged and accommodated throughout South Mammoth with necessary pull-outs, shelters, and signage. Under the SDNDP, transit hubs and stops would be coordinated with areas of higher density and adequate parking facilities.

Neighborhood District Planning: Concepts and Strategies: This document sets forth concepts for the integrated districts of Downtown, including Main Street and North Old Mammoth Road and South Old Mammoth Road. This plan is rooted in the guiding principles and policy directions established in the General Plan and Community Vision,⁶ which anticipates the (i) design of places where people want to be in which distinctive, vibrant and walkable mixed use districts and centers are a focus of activity, and contain a mixture and diversity of uses, and provide a well-designed, attractive and comfortable built environment; (ii) implementation of program and development standards to support and reinforce the desired character and function of the district; (iii) development of publicly-owned catalyst sites to jump-start desirable development; and (iv) building of momentum through partnership between the Town and private investment.

Accepted and consensus planning concepts and strategies are to create a thriving destination resort community with residential neighborhoods oriented around a series of distinct, connected and vibrant mixed use districts, including the Downtown, which provide a range of shopping, dining, services, and employment opportunities. It is expected that “feet-first” mobility, including a balance between auto, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes, would be supported. Walkable nodes, with approximate radii of 1,000 feet would be located along sections of Main Street. The concept for South Old Mammoth Road also anticipates a walkable retail/commercial street with an emphasis on arts, entertainment and events. The mixed use centers along Main Street (Downtown) and Old Mammoth Road corridors would include well-proportioned public street with a strong pedestrian-oriented retail frontage at the street edge, generous sidewalks and streetscape features most often seen as traditional “downtown” and “main street” contexts.

(ii) Land Use Element

The policies of the Land Use Element describe and determine how the community will retain its community character and small town atmosphere while enhancing its success as a destination resort. Policies embrace principles such as creating walkable communities, mixed land uses, providing a variety of transportation choices, and taking advantage of compact building design. Subtopics include (i) Livability, (ii) Housing, (iii) Small Town Character, (iv) Accommodations and Community Amenities, and (v) Urban Growth Boundary. Community goals for the Land Use Element include being stewards of the Town’s character and natural surroundings; increasing the housing supply for the workforce; designing neighborhoods and districts for walking through the land use pattern and form; and maintaining the Urban Growth Boundary to ensure a compact urban form and protection of natural and outdoor recreational resources.

⁶ *Town of Mammoth Lakes Neighborhood District Planning Concepts and Strategies Plan, August 3, 2011, page 3.*

Land use designations in the General Plan correspond to a range of uses, including varying densities of residential uses, commercial (C-1 and C-2) and other resort, industrial, various specific plans, and national forest.

(iii) Mobility Element

The intent of the adopted Mobility Element is to achieve an integrated multi-modal transportation system that serves the various needs of residents, employees and visitors and to ensure that Mammoth Lakes will be connected, accessible, uncongested and safe with emphasis on feet first, public transportation second, and car last. The Mobility Element anticipates that movement throughout the Town will be improved through measures to increase and improve transportation options; reinforce feet first; connect sidewalks and trails to transit and parking facilities; encourage alternate transportation. Component plans have been adopted to implement the community goals of the adopted Mobility Element as well as contain and address specific policies from the Mobility Element Update. These include the Pedestrian Master Plan, Trails System Master Plan, and the General Bikeway Master Plan.

Trails System Master Plan

The Trails System Master Plan (October 19, 2011) (TSMP) envisions an integrated system of infrastructure and programs that support recreation and mobility simultaneously, by seamlessly connecting homes, hotels, businesses, recreation nodes, and backcountry experiences. The TSMP includes a strong focus on providing facilities that will improve access to trails from all modes of transportation. In addition to new trails, paved pathways, signage and wayfinding and associated amenities. The TSMP also includes suggestions for other improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bus stops, bike lanes, bicycle parking, summer maintenance, and snow removal.

Objectives of the TSMP include (i) identifying necessary improvements relative to pedestrian safety, convenience and comfort; (ii) updating the General Bikeway Plan and developing an on-street bikeway network that enhances bicyclist safety, convenience and comfort; (iii) ensuring that pedestrians and bicyclists can access the public transit system safely, conveniently and comfortably; and that public transit serves all key recreation nodes; and (iiii) providing the information necessary for residents and visitors to navigate. The TSMP also supports pedestrian-oriented development and 10-foot sidewalks along Main Street, and recommends bike lanes in Main Street as an interim solution for closing a gap in the primary paved path system. General recommendations include a minimum sidewalk-to-major roadway ratio of 1.6 to 1 to be achieved by including sidewalks on both sides of all arterials and on one side of all collector streets. Mid-block pedestrian connectors would be considered in high pedestrian activity areas. The TSMP also includes a bike route plan and a bicycle parking component and addresses signage and wayfinding for multi-use paths, bike lanes, bike routes, pedestrian facilities, soft-surface trails, and easements. A goal of the TSMP is to develop a year-round maintenance plan, to prioritize snow removal on paved paths and sidewalks, to preserve pavement markings, and to coordinate between roadway and sidewalk snow removal.

Pedestrian Master Plan

The Pedestrian Master Plan (adopted April 16, 2014) guides the future development and enhancement of pedestrian facilities within the Town and is intended to follow the goals, policies, and actions of the Mobility Element related to pedestrian infrastructure. The Pedestrian Master Plan outlines specific locations for future sidewalks and promenades, which would result in an estimated 6.7 miles of new sidewalks. The

Pedestrian Master Plan also recommends sidewalk buffers in key locations, traffic calming devices along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road, furnishings around traffic stops, connectivity and expanded network of multi-use paths. Other recommendations include improved mid-block connection with active warning beacons and pedestrian access at intersections; ADA-compliant staircases and ramps, as needed; maintained crosswalk markings; traffic signals at key pedestrian crossings; improved intersection geometry; pedestrian underpasses and bridges; pedestrian access at construction zones; use of materials suitable to the climate; split pedestrian crossings; curb extensions; improved visibility and lighting in key areas; pedestrian warning signs at key locations; and improved wayfinding for tourists within the Town boundaries.

General Bikeway Master Plan

The General Bikeway Master Plan (GBMP) (adopted April 16, 2014) is a blueprint for making bicycling an integral part of daily life in Mammoth Lakes. A primary goal of the GBMP is to facilitate bicycling for transportation and recreation and to support “feet first” objectives. GBMP recommendations include improving existing conditions to meet town standards, to create a safe and comfortable cycling environment that is accessible to cyclists of all ages, possibly narrowing vehicle travel lanes (from 12-foot lanes to 10- or 11-foot lanes) to provide on-street paths. Objectives also include requiring or improving signage and pavement markings and designating low-volume routes as shared facilities. GBMP recommendations include studying the use of bicycle boulevards on key residential streets, improving bicycle safety at signalized intersections; studying a bicycle sharing program; constructing additional multi-use paths, implementing bicycle parking in key locations, and providing cyclist-oriented lockers, showers, and staging areas, where appropriate and feasible.

(b) Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, Title 17

The Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code is contained in Title 17 of the Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code (MLMC). The purpose of the Zoning Code is to carry out the goals, objectives and policies of the Mammoth Lakes General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Additional purposes set forth in Section 17.04.020 are to implement the General Plan by encouraging the uses of land as designated by the General Plan; provide standards for the orderly growth and development of the Town; require high quality planning and design for development that enhances the visual character of the Town, avoids conflicts between land uses, enhances functionality and safety, and preserves the scenic qualities of the Town by maintaining adequate open space; conserve and protect the natural resources of the Town, its natural beauty and significant environmental amenities; encourage a range of transportation options with a strong pedestrian emphasis and emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to use of personal vehicle; assist in reducing dependence on the automobile by fostering development that is compact in form, and pedestrian-oriented; and create a comprehensive and stable pattern of land uses upon which to plan transportation, water supply, sewerage and other public facilities and utilities.

Chapter 17.24 of the MLMC sets forth regulations, including permit requirements, maximum building heights, setback requirements, floor areas, and other guides and restrictions pertinent to commercial zoning districts. The purpose of Chapter 17.24 is to achieve the purposes outlined in the Neighborhood and District Character Element of the 2007 General Plan, specific to the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road Districts. MLMC Section 17.24.010 defines the Town’s commercially-zoned designations as Downtown (D), Old Mammoth Road (OMR), and Mixed Lodging/Residential (MLR). Section 17.24.010 describes the purposes of the individual commercial zoning districts and the manner in which they are applied as follows:

- Downtown (D) District is intended to provide a thriving mix of residential, non-residential, and lodging uses and a distinctive gateway entry into town, with a focus on ground-level commercial uses and active frontages. The development standards are intended to concentrate development along Main Street with a focus on shop front buildings that frame the street and provide an animated, pedestrian-friendly environment with high visual quality. The current maximum FAR is 2.5. Lodging development has a maximum density of 80 rooms per acre. Residential development has a maximum density of 12 units/acre. The D zoning district is consistent with the Commercial 2 (C-2) land use designation of the General Plan. (This section is subject to the Project's proposed Zoning Code Amendment regarding units/acre.)
- Old Mammoth Road (OMR) District is intended as an arts and culture district oriented toward medium scale commercial development along Old Mammoth Road, emphasizing community serving retail, artist galleries, office and service uses. It is intended to encourage a mix and intensity of uses in a pedestrian-scaled environment at a scale and form that is appropriate to its neighborhood context and adjacent residential uses and forms. The maximum FAR is 2.5. Lodging development has a maximum density of 80 rooms/acre. Residential development has a maximum density of 12 units/acre. The OMR zoning district is consistent with the Commercial 2 (C-2) land use designation of the General Plan. (This section is subject to the Project's proposed Zoning Code Amendment regarding units and rooms/acre.)
- Mixed Lodging/Residential (MLR) District is intended to allow one or more of a variety of lodging, residential, and non-residential uses to encourage a mix of uses and emphasize transient occupancy. The maximum FAR is 2.5. Lodging development has a maximum density of 80 rooms per acre. Residential development has a maximum density of 12 units per acre. The MLR zoning district is consistent with the Commercial 1 (C-1) land use designation of the General Plan. (This section is subject to the Project's proposed Zoning Code Amendment regarding units/acre.)

Allowed uses and permit requirements for the commercial zones are set forth in MLMC Section 17.24.020. Under this code section, commercial uses, multi-family residences, live-work units, and mixed use are permitted. However, multi-family residences and live-work units are not allowed on the ground floor along Primary and Secondary Active Frontages in the D and OMR zones. (Primary Active Frontages occur along sections of Main Street and Old Mammoth Road and Secondary Active Frontage occur along sections of Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, Tavern Road, Meridian Boulevard and Chateau Road.) Although multi-family uses are permitted by right in the MLR zone, these are subject to MLMC, Chapter 17.52 (Standards for Specific Land Uses and Activities) applicable to multi-family residential Projects.

Section 17.24.030, Commercial District Development Standards, regulates building density, frontage improvements, building placement requirements, building face height, location of parking, and access for commercial properties. Section 17.24.030.B requires new development to provide street frontage improvements in accordance with adopted Town Plans (i.e. Pedestrian Master Plan, Bikeway Master Plan, etc.), including but not limited to sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, bus stops, and other typical frontage improvements. Under this code section, except where occupied by a building or used for building access, the property frontage, for a depth of 10 feet from the property line, shall be improved so that it functions as a wider public sidewalk; utilized for active outdoor uses such as outdoor dining, or improved with landscaping, public art, and/or pedestrian amenities such as outdoor seating.

Section 17.24.030.D requires a minimum step-back of 10 feet at the building face to the next higher story, except that a maximum of 20 percent of the length of the building face may exceed the maximum building

face height by up to 10 feet without a step-back; and an additional 20 percent of the length of the building face may exceed the maximum building face height by up to 20 feet without a step-back. Section 17.24.030.E establishes limitations on the location of parking. Under this code section, buildings shall be placed as close to the street as possible, with parking underground, behind a building, or on the interior side or rear of the site. Parking may be located within the required setback, provided that the parking is underground or submerged, screened along the public right-of-way with a wall, hedge, trellis, and/or landscaping, the buildings are built close to the public sidewalk to the maximum extent feasible; or the site is small and constrained such that underground, partially submerged, or surface parking located more than 20 feet from the street frontage is not feasible. Under Section 17.24.030.F, properties fronting Main Street that redevelop to claim an existing frontage road shall incorporate a re-routed access road to the rear of the property. The re-routed access road shall be designed to be continuous with those of adjacent properties, and to provide adequate circulation and emergency access.

Building orientation and entrance treatment is set forth in Section 17.24.040. Section 17.24.040.A establishes maximum block length and requirements for mid-block pedestrian crossings. Section 17.24.040.B, requires the following: (i) All buildings located on a public street shall be oriented toward, and have their primary entrances facing the public street, (ii) Building entrances shall be emphasized with special architectural, modulation of roof lines or landscape treatments; and (iii) Building entrances shall be designed so that snow does not shed freely into entrances and the buildup of ice and snow within pedestrian areas is minimized.

Section 17.24.040.C sets forth requirements for transparency and openings along the sidewalk for commercial buildings. Under this subsection, exterior walls facing and within 20 feet of a street, park, plaza, pedestrian walkway, or other public outdoor space shall include windows, doors, or other openings for at least 60 percent of the building wall area located between 2.5 and 8 feet above the level of the sidewalk. No wall may run in a continuous horizontal plane for more than 15 feet without an opening.

Building design is addressed in Section 17.24.040.D, which requires that buildings be designed to create a pedestrian-friendly environment and support a vital and active public realm. Buildings must appear integrated with the natural features and existing buildings in the districts; complement the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountain setting; and contribute to the Town of Mammoth Lakes' "village in the trees" identity. Section 17.24.040.F requires on-site pedestrian circulation according to the following standards: (i) A system of pedestrian walkways shall connect all buildings on a site to each other, to on-site automobile and bicycle parking areas, and to any on-site open space areas or pedestrian amenities; (ii) Regular connections between on-site walkways and the public sidewalk shall be provided. An on-site walkway shall connect the primary building entry or entries to a public sidewalk on each street frontage. On sloping sites, the walkway between the building and the sidewalk or other public outdoor area shall be designed as usable open space with generously sized steps and landings, with features such as low risers and wide treads, and any planter boxes that include seating ledges, (iii) Direct and convenient access shall be provided from commercial and mixed-use Projects to adjoining residential and commercial areas to the maximum extent feasible while still providing for safety and security; (iv) Safe and convenient pedestrian connections shall be provided from transit stops to building entrances. This subsection also establishes design standards for pedestrian walkway.

Section 17.24.040.G establishes standards for public open space, which must be provided for non-residential development with greater than 1,000 square feet of floor area. Open space amenities include seating,

usability, including but not limited to trees and other landscaping, shade structures, lighting, drinking fountains, water features, public art, signage or performance areas. Additional building and open space design features required under the Zoning Code are discussed in Section 4.A, Aesthetics, of this EIR.

Table 4.7.1, *Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code the Zoning Code Commercial District Standards*, summarizes specific standards applicable to the Town's commercially zoned areas.

b. Existing Conditions

(1) Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments

The Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments Study Area related to the FAR encompasses the areas designated as Commercial 1 (C-1) and Commercial 2 (C-2) in the General Plan. Current zoning in the commercial district is D, OMR and MLR, as illustrated in **Figure 2-3, *Zoning Districts***, of this EIR. The area comprises approximately 122 acres and is centered along Main Street (State Route 203), extending from the Town's boundary on the east to an area just east of Minaret Road on the west, and along Old Mammoth Road from SR 203 to just south of Chateau Road.

(a) Main Street Corridor

The Main Street corridor is defined by Main Street/Highway 203, the primary highway used by residents and visitors to enter and exit the Town. Although the paved roadway width and number of lanes varies, the Main Street right-of-way is approximately 200 feet wide along the majority of the corridor. Discontinuous two-way frontage roads, which provide access to commercial uses along the street, parallel Main Street along much of its south side and parts of the north side. The overall characteristic of developed properties along Main Street is of one- to three-story buildings set back behind access roads and surface parking lots. Uses are varied, and include medium scale strip-commercial developments, stand-alone, single-use commercial and office uses, motels and some residential uses. A mix of architectural styles include alpine-inspired pitched roofs and buildings representing the aesthetics of the 1970's and 1980's when many of Main Street's commercial and lodging Projects were developed. Stand-alone buildings, dominant street front parking, and the access roads, remove development from the street and evoke an automobile-oriented strip commercial aspect to the street. Although forested areas remain along Main Street on some of undeveloped parcels, tree cover in other areas is intermittent. On developed parcels, trees are often limited to single specimen trees or small tree clusters.

Transit stops are placed at various locations on both sides of Main Street. Pedestrian infrastructure, primarily consisting of sections of a pedestrian path, has been developed over time. While the path is generally complete along the eastern end of Main Street, it is not continuous, requires street crossings from north to south, and does not exist along the west end of Main Street. The transit shelter on Main Street lacks sidewalk access.⁷ Pedestrian-activated crossing signals are in place at the Post Office and Laurel Mountain Road. Main Street ascends in elevation from east to west and significant grade changes are found from north to south at the west end of Main Street. The east portion, east of Old Mammoth Road, is relatively flat. Broad views of Mammoth Mountain to the west and/or the Sherwin Range to the south are visible at certain vantage points along Main Street.

⁷ *Town of Mammoth Lakes, Downtown Concept for Main Street, Chapter 3, September 1, 2010, page 25.*

Table 4.7-1

**Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code the Zoning Code Commercial District Standards
(Based on MLMC Tables 17.24.030-1 through 17.24.030-4)**

Development Feature	Downtown ("D")	Old Mammoth Road ("OMR")	Mixed Lodging/Residential ("MLR")
Lot Area	10,000 square feet		
Lot Area, corner lot	11,000 square feet		
Floor Area Ratio ("FAR")	Maximum 2.5 , applicable to entire development		
Residential	Maximum 12 units per acre		
Single Room Occupancy ("SRO")	Maximum 48 rooms per acre		
Lodging, fractional, and timeshare development	Maximum 80 rooms per acre		
Minimum setbacks on Main Street and Frontage Road	0 feet		
Other designated active frontage areas	Property line or 15 feet back from curb, whichever is greater		N/A
All other streets	10 feet		
Interior side and rear	0 feet, 15 feet adjacent to a residential district		
Building Height	55 feet	45 feet	45 feet for lots with slopes of less than 10%; 55 feet for lots with slopes greater than 10%
Maximum Building Face Height	20 feet applicable to "Primary Active" frontages		
Maximum Building Face Height along all streets and adjacent to residential districts	20 feet for 60% of the building face; 35 feet for 20% of the building face; 45 feet for 20% of the building face.		
Stepback	Minimum 10 feet for building face below		
Ground floor, Non-residential uses	Minimum 14 feet from floor to ceiling		
Ground floor, Non-residential uses	8 feet clear from floor to ceiling		
Upper floor	8 feet clear from floor to ceiling		
Parking podium	The maximum height of the parking podium visible from the street is four feet from the finished grade. ^a		
Setback from street property line	20 feet		
Setback from buildings and public plazas	8 feet, 5 feet walkway plus 3 feet of landscaping applicable to above ground parking		
Curb cuts	Minimized and in areas least likely to impede pedestrian circulation		
Required snow storage	An area equal to 60% of all parking and driveways on the site		

^a Where a building sits atop a parking podium (underground parking) the building height shall be measured from the top of the parking podium provided that the building height does not increase by more than seven feet six inches (MLMC Section 17.36.060.B.1.c).

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, PCR Services Corporation, 2015

(b) Old Mammoth Road Corridor

Old Mammoth Road is a three-lane arterial that extends to the south of Main Street. The corridor is largely developed with commercial uses such as retail, restaurants, gas stations, real estate offices, banks, and other services, multi-family residential, lodging, and mixed-use. Secondary commercial and residential uses are found along neighboring streets. Existing buildings are generally between one and two stories in height. The majority of parking is provided in surface lots, although more of these lots are oriented to the side or rear of commercial buildings, compared to Main Street. A street narrowing and streetscape improvement Project in the 1990's added sidewalks, lighting and landscaping along Old Mammoth Road from Main Street to Chateau Road; however, several neighboring streets lack sidewalks. Although trees are common along property boundaries and street frontages, Old Mammoth Road retains a "strip commercial" and automobile-oriented aspect, as does Main Street.

(2) Mobility Element Update Study Area

The Mobility Element Update study area corresponds to the area encompassed by the General Plan. Three boundaries define the Town, including (i) the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), an area encompassing approximately 4 square miles and forming the nucleus of the town, (ii) the Municipal Boundary, an area encompassing approximately 24 square miles and including the Lakes Basin, Shady Rest, and most of the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area; and (iii) the Planning Area or "sphere of influence," an area encompassing approximately 125 square miles. The Municipal Boundary comprises (i) the portion of the Town containing the majority of developed community, and (ii) a separate island area not physically connected to the other municipal area and containing the Mammoth Yosemite Airport, approximately 10 miles to the east of the municipal area. Of the total approximately 24 square miles within the Municipal Boundary, approximately 4.6 square miles or approximately 2,500 acres, including the urbanized area and airport, is located within the UGB. Within the UGB, including the airport, approximately 3.5 square miles of land has been developed, leaving approximately 1.1 square miles of vacant developable land within the UGB.

In general, the Mobility Element Update Study Area is focused on the UGB, since it is the Town's focus of vehicle, cycling, and pedestrian activity. However, the Town's Planning Area includes areas in which existing or proposed facilities have direct relationship to the current municipal boundary and services. This area extends from the Whitmore Recreation Area on the east to the Mammoth Scenic Loop on the north. The Planning Area incorporates Whitmore Park, Smoky Bear Flat east of U.S. Highway 395, the Mammoth Scenic Loop Road, and other recreational areas maintained by the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The Planning Area also includes Inyo National Forest lands located within Madera County. The only vehicular access to the land within Madera County is through the Town, which provides public safety and building inspection services.

Existing land uses within the UGB are reflected in the Town's General Plan and Zoning Map. The range of uses includes mixed lodging/residential, single and multi-family residential, rural residential, mobile home, resort, open space, public/quasi public, and industrial zones. The developed UGB has the aspect of a resort community because of the presence of forest trees along property boundaries and streets; the presence of golf courses and other recreational facilities; many restaurants; the general character of businesses (e.g., real estate offices), and the North Village, which consists of a collection of hotels, high-density housing, restaurants, and access to the Mammoth Mountain gondola.

2. METHODOLOGY AND THRESHOLDS

a. Methodology

The analysis of land use impacts considers the consistency of the Project with adopted and accepted plans and policies that regulate land use in the Town of Mammoth Lakes and that relate specifically to the characteristics of the Project change of intensity of permitted development in commercially-zoned areas, replacement of General Plan PAOT policies with Project Impact Evaluation Criteria (PIEC), and removing CBIZ and modifying TDR policies supported by the Land Use Element, and density constraints in the Zoning Code. It also evaluates the consistency of the Mobility Element Update with the objectives of the adopted General Plan. The analysis also takes into consideration the effects of the Project on the existing physical environment, as evaluated in respective environmental evaluation sections of this Draft EIR, and the extent to which incompatibilities or other land use changes could result in physical impacts to the environment. As discussed in the Project Description, Table 2-2, the Project's additional residential units and commercial floor area over the General Plan buildout assumes land would be available for mixed use development as a result of the vacation of the frontage road. Estimation of total floor area and residential and lodging units assume that street-facing floor area would be commercial with 25 percent of the ground floor area used for commercial purposes and 75 percent of the ground floor area could be used for non-commercial uses (i.e., residential and/or lodging).

The Project also includes adjustments to the General Plan commercial zone boundary to comply with the commercial zoning of the properties. This affects a total of seven parcels as shown in Figure 2-4, *Proposed Revisions to the Land Use Diagram*, in Chapter 2 of this EIR. The amendments are to correct the General Plan Land Use Diagram to be consistent with the Zoning Map which was updated in 2014. In 2014, the Downtown zone was moved further west to align with Sierra Boulevard on the north and Manzanita Road on the south. Five parcels on the north side of Main Street east of Sierra Boulevard would be amended from C-1 to C-2. In addition, there are two parcels on the south side of Main Street west of Manzanita Road, the western parcel would be changed from C-2 to C-1 and the eastern parcel would be changed from C-2 to HDR-1. These corrections are administrative components of the Project and would not result in additional inconsistencies or non-compliance. As such, these administrative changes are not directly addressed in the following evaluation.

b. Thresholds

For purposes of this EIR, the Town has utilized the checklist questions in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* as thresholds of significance to determine whether the Project would have a significant environmental impact regarding land use. Based on the potential for land use impacts identified in the Initial Study, which is contained in Appendix A of this EIR, the following thresholds of significance are used in this section. The Project would result in a significant impact if the Project would:

- LU-1** Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the Project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect;
- LU-2** Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

As indicated in the Initial Study and summarized in Chapter 6, *Other Mandatory CEQA Considerations*, of the EIR, the Project would not physically divide an established community since the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments address the commercial districts, which are primarily developed. Future development within the area would be infill development. The Mobility Element Update would not result in roads that would divide the community but rather would result in a complete street network including alternate modes of transportation such as pedestrian, bicycle, trails, and multi-use paths.

c. Applicable General Plan Goals/Policies and Adopted Mitigation Measures

There are no mitigation measures in the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs associated with the 2007 General Plan Update or the Trails Master Plan EIRs regarding land use. However, the following community goals for the Land Use Element are relevant to the Project:

Livability

Goal L.1. Be stewards of the community's small town character and charm, compact form, spectacular natural surroundings and access to public lands by planning for and managing growth.

- **Policy L.1.A:** Limit total peak population of permanent and seasonal residents and visitors to 52,000 people. (This policy is subject to the Project's proposed Land Use Element Amendment).
- **Policy L.1.B:** Require all development to meet community goals for highest quality of design, energy efficiency, open space preservation, and promotion of a livable, sustainable community. Development that does not fulfill these goals shall not be allowed.
- **Policy L.1.C:** Give preference to infill development.

Housing

Goal L.2. Substantially increase housing supply available to the workforce.

- **Policy L.2.A:** Emphasize workforce housing for essential public service employees, such as firefighters, police, snow removal operators, and teachers.
- **Policy L.2.B:** Encourage a mix of housing types and forms consistent with design and land use policies.
- **Policy L.2.C:** Rehabilitate existing housing and build new housing for workforce housing.
- **Policy L.2.D:** For housing development Projects where all units are deed restricted for workforce housing, a density bonus may be granted in addition to any bonus granted pursuant to the State Density Bonus Law up to a combined bonus of twice the density identified for the designation in which the Project is located.

Small Town Character

Goal L.3. Enhance livability by designing neighborhoods and districts for walking through the arrangement of land uses and development intensities.

- **Policy L.3.A:** Achieve a diversity of uses and activities and efficient use of land by maintaining a range of development types.
- **Policy L.3.B:** Develop vital retail centers and streets.
- **Policy L.3.C:** Encourage development of small neighborhood-serving retail and services dispersed through town.
- **Policy L.3.D:** Encourage outdoor dining in resort and commercial districts to increase street level Animation.
- **Policy L.3.E:** Require a minimum amount of development in the Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest Districts to ensure supplies of housing for employees and to reduce automobile trips.
- **Policy L.3.F:** Ensure appropriate community benefits are provided through district planning and development Projects.
- **Policy L.3.G:** Do not allow the transfer of unused density from built parcels.
- **Policy L.3.H:** Density may be clustered or transferred within clearly articulated district, master, and specific plans to enhance General Plan goals and policies. Development rights may also be transferred between districts when that transfer furthers protection of identified environmentally sensitive areas. (This policy would be modified by the Project's proposed Land Use Element Amendment.)

Accommodations and Community Amenities

Goal L.4: Be the symbolic and physical heart of the Eastern Sierra: the regional economic, administrative, commercial, recreational, educational and cultural center.

Goal L.5: Provide an overall balance of uses, facilities and services to further the town's role as a destination resort community.

- **Policy L.5.A:** Encourage and support a range of visitor accommodations that include a variety of services and amenities.
- **Policy L.5.B:** Locate visitor lodging in appropriate areas.
- **Policy L.5.C:** Ensure there are an adequate number of units available for nightly rental.
- **Policy L.5.D:** Encourage rehabilitation and renovation of existing visitor accommodations.
- **Policy L.5.E:** Development shall complement and diversify the range of resort community activities and amenities.
- **Policy L.5.F:** Require all multi-family, resort, and specific plan development to include activities, amenities and services to support long-term visitation.

- **Policy L.5.G:** In the C-1 and C-2 designations, density may be increased to no more than twice the density for hotel, motel, and similar transient lodging Projects that specifically enhance the tourism, community, and environmental objectives of the Town. This enhancement must be through the provision of amenities, services, and/or environmental benefits above and beyond those required to meet the incremental demands of the Project. These amenities, services, and environmental benefits include, but are not limited to those listed under “Community Character” on page 24 of the General Plan. Any such increase shall further the Community Vision, shall be consistent with the discussion of “Build-out” on page 37 of the General Plan, shall be consistent with approved District Plans, and shall be subject to such rules, processes, and findings as may be adopted by the Town Council in its sole discretion. (This policy is subject to the Project’s proposed Land Use Element Amendment.)

Urban Growth Boundary

Goal L.6: Maintain the Urban Growth Boundary to ensure a compact urban form; protect natural and outdoor recreational resources; prevent sprawl.

- **Policy L.6.A:** No residential, commercial, or industrial development is permitted outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) (identified in Figure 4 of the General Plan).
- **Policy L.6.B:** Recreation facilities, other public facilities, and public utility installations may be permitted outside of the UGB when determined to be in the public interest and compatible with other Town goals.
- **Policy L.6.C:** The Town shall work collaboratively with Mono County, Inyo National Forest, and the Bureau of Land Management to ensure that land uses occurring adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary are compatible with Town goals.
- **Policy L.6.D:** Support land exchanges for existing special uses that maintain the integrity of the General Plan and promote Town policies when determined to be in the public interest and compatible with other Town goals.
- **Policy L.6.E:** National Forest lands that are exchanged into private ownership will be included within the UGB whether or not they are contiguous with the UGB.
- **Policy L.6.F:** The Town may consider adjustments to the UGB that do not increase the acres of developable land of Mammoth Lakes, are contiguous to the UGB, and are otherwise in the public interest.
- **Policy L.6.G:** Coordinate with agencies undertaking planning or development activities outside of the UGB and within the Town’s Planning Area.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Threshold LU-1 The Project would result in a significant impact if the Project would conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the Project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Impact Statement LU-1: *The Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update would not conflict with the objectives of the State of California General Plan Guidelines and the Neighborhood and District Character, Land Use, and Mobility Elements of the adopted Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan to vitalize the Town's commercial area with active street fronts and to reduce automobile dependency. Because the Project would not conflict with adopted and accepted plans and policies, impacts with respect to land use would be less than significant.*

a. General Plan

(1) Neighborhood and District Character Element

According to the Neighborhood and District Character Element of the General Plan, the vision for the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road areas is to invite pedestrian activity and provide gathering places for interaction with a vibrant mix of retail, commercial, and residential uses. Ground level uses would contain a minimum 25 percent commercial floor area that would be oriented to the street. Development would have a high level of detail and active storefront uses resulting in a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Commercial corridors would be walkable year-round, vibrant, colorful, and accessible. Uses should be mixed to allow offices, residential housing and visitor accommodations above ground floor retail. Retail or service uses oriented to the street would animate the Main Street District.

The proposed removal of the density cap would accommodate greater residential and hotel densities within the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road neighborhoods and, thus, could introduce more people to these areas. The proposed FAR approach (minimum of 0.75 FAR and maximum of 2.0 FAR) would not conflict with the objective of the Neighborhood and District Character Element to create a traditional "Main Street." Zoning regulations that require closer proximity of buildings to the street front, transparency (glazing), sidewalks and access to transit, improved landscaping, and other amenities, would not change. The potential introduction of more people and implementation of such Code-required street front improvements would be consistent with the objectives of the Neighborhood and District Character Element to provide pedestrian-oriented sidewalks, higher day and evening activity along the street front, more transit use, and greater animation of commercial districts.

(a) Neighborhood District Planning: Concepts and Strategies

The proposed amendment of General Plan Policy L.5.G, which allows an increase in density in the C-1 and C-2 designations to no more than twice the maximum hotel room density, for hotel, motel, and similar transient lodging Projects of the Town and Zoning Code Sections 17.24.010 (Purpose of Commercial Zones) and 17.24.030 (Commercial Zone Standards) would result in the removal of the cap on numbers of units or rooms in the C-1 and C-2 designated areas. These Zoning Code sections, which establish a maximum density

of 2.5 FAR and 12 units per acre in the Town's commercial zones (D, OMR, and MLR), would be revised to provide a minimum 0.75 FAR and maximum 2.0 FAR, with no cap on number of residential and hotel units.⁸

Under the proposed changes, there would be no change in existing in regulations pertinent to maximum building heights, setbacks, setbacks, etc. shown in Table 4.7-1, above. The removal of the density cap would allow more residential units per acre (within a limited building or floor area). This would increase development choices (flexibility) by allowing the combination of more, smaller residential units with commercial uses (mixed-use) or a range of residential unit sizes in a single building. Such flexibility would be a potential incentive for new development. All new development would be subject to the requirements of the General Plan and the Zoning Code regarding building orientation, proximity to sidewalks, street-front retail, streetscape and other requirements. Because the intent of the Neighborhood District Planning Concepts and Strategies is to create intensive development in the Downtown area, with a mixture of visitor and local-serving retail, housing, and lodging, greater activity along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road, the potential increase in residential and hotel density would support the purpose of the Neighborhood District Planning Concepts and Strategies. Impacts with respect to this plan would be less than significant.

(b) Town of Mammoth Lakes Downtown Concept for Main Street District Plan

The proposed change in General Plan Policy L.5.G and Zoning Code Sections 17.24.010 and 17.24.030 to eliminate density caps on residential and hotel units within the Town's commercially-zoned areas would potentially increase the number of residential units and hotel rooms that would be located within the Downtown and, therefore, could increase pedestrian presence. In addition, the potential increase in residents and visitors would generate greater demand for services, restaurants, and retail uses that, in turn, would potentially generate new development. Any new development in the commercial zone would continue to be subject to the requirements of the General Plan and the Zoning Code regarding building orientation, proximity to sidewalks, ground floor commercial uses and transparency (windows), which would provide "opportunities for browsing a range of street front retail shops and restaurants" (an objective of the DNDP), streetscape, and other benefits that would implement the goals of the DNDP to change and improve the physical and design conditions along the Main Street corridor and to create a walkable, connected downtown.

The Mobility Element Update contains goals, policies, and actions that would also further the objectives of the DNDP. Mobility Element Update's Goal M.1 to create safe and efficient "complete streets" based on "feet-first" principles, and respective policies that provide for wayfinding that guides residents and visitors and provision of a network of interconnected streets, paths, sidewalks, trails, and mid-block connectors would support an active pedestrian environment. Mobility Element Update Goal M.4 would improve snow and ice management by grooming and/or removing snow and ice on streets, sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities would enhance year-round accessibility and visibility of storefronts, and allow for year-round pedestrian use of sidewalks and paths.

The "feet first" goal of the Mobility Element Update (Goal M.8) is to provide a linked year-round recreational and commuter pedestrian system that is safe and comprehensive by ensuring that all planning processes

⁸ Assumptions in the FAR analysis included 25 percent of the ground floor would be occupied by commercial use in order to create an active streetscape. Uses at the back portion of a building, up to 75 percent of the ground floor, could be occupied by non-commercial uses.

identify and implement improvements to pedestrian safety. This goal also requires streets, sidewalks, and trails to be designed and promoted to encourage walking. This would be consistent with the objectives of the DNDP to encourage greater pedestrian activity. In addition, the “Main Street Reconfiguration” under the Mobility Element Update envisions a redesigned Main Street, including the removal of the existing frontage roads and conversion to a four-lane cross-section with a center median and turn pockets.⁹ This would meet the goal of the DNDP to provide a substantial median that would provide a site for public art and streetscape features that would add to Main Street’s aesthetic appeal and creating a safe and walkable downtown.

Goal M.14 of the Mobility Element Update is to support alternative transportation, housing affordability, and public health goals through implementation of improved parking strategies and requirements. Under this goal, parking efficiency would be increased through such measures as shared parking between uses on site- or within walking distance, internal capture between uses on-site or within walking distance, tandem or stacked parking, transit-oriented design, incorporation of technology based on parking infrastructure, and other measures. It is also a goal of the Mobility Element Update to design parking to meet applicable design goals and minimize negative impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.

As with the removal of the density cap on residential units and hotel rooms, the Mobility Element Update would implement the objectives of the DNDP to vitalize the Mammoth Lakes Downtown area and, as such, would support the goals and policies of this accepted plan.

(c) North Old Mammoth Road District Special Study

The proposed change in General Plan Policy L.5.G and Zoning Code Sections 17.24.010 and 17.24.030 to eliminate density caps on residential and hotel units within the Town’s commercially-zoned areas would potentially increase the number of residential units and hotel rooms that would be located with the proximity of North Old Mammoth Road and, therefore, could increase pedestrian presence. Greater residential and visitor population would increase demand for services, restaurants, and retail uses. This would support the goals of the NOMRDSS to reinforce the existing North Mammoth Road District as a walkable community and a desirable place for residents as well as visitors to live, shop, and recreate.

The Mobility Element Update contains goals, policies, and actions to reduce dependency on the automobile would further the objectives of the NOMRDSS. The Mobility Element Update’s Goal M.1 to create safe and efficient “complete streets” based on “feet-first” principles, and respective policies that provide for an interconnected network of streets, mid-block connectors, paths, sidewalks, trails, and bike facilities would improve multimodal access, disperse traffic, improve emergency access, and reduce congestion. The Mobility Element Update Goal M.4 would improve snow and ice management by grooming and/or removing snow and ice on streets, sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities would enhance year-round accessibility and visibility of storefronts, and allow for year-round pedestrian use of sidewalks, paths, bicycle facilities, and transit stops. Goal M.10.2 is to create a safe and comfortable cycling environment that is accessible to cyclists of all ages. Goal M.12 is to provide year-round public transit that is convenient and efficient and that increases transit ridership. Policy M.14-2 is to support development of strategically located public parking facilities that would promote the use of all transportation modes and the “park once” concept.

⁹ *Town of Mammoth Lakes Draft Mobility Element, 2011, page 3-14.*

Implementation of the proposed zone change and Mobility Element Update would support the land use and mobility objectives of the NOMRDSS. As such, the Project would support the goals of this accepted plan.

(d) South Districts Neighborhood District Planning Study

The proposed Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would eliminate density caps on residential and hotel units within the commercially-zoned South Old Mammoth Road area and, as such, potentially increase medium- and high-density residential development and hotel rooms; in turn, generating a higher residential and visitor population and potential pedestrian presence, thus activating the district. As such, the Project would be consistent with the land use objectives of the SDNDP.

The Mobility Element Update would support the SDNDP's objectives to provide vehicle and pedestrian mid-block connectors, wayfinding signage to reduce sign clutter, improve traffic flow, reduce trips on major streets and safely direct pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users to key destinations and visitor attractions. Under the Mobility Element Update, all new streets would be designed as complete streets, strategically located public parking facilities that would promote the use of all transportation modes and the "park once" concept, and "feet first" infrastructure such as multi-use paths and sidewalks would be continuous throughout the district. Because the Mobility Element Update would support the objectives of the SDNDP, it would be consistent with this accepted plan.

(2) Land Use Element

The Project would eliminate Land Use Element Policy L.1.A, Policy L.5.G, and Action L.3.H.1 and modify Policy L.3.H of the General Plan Land Use Element. These policies and action would be superseded by the Town's adopted PIEC process and the removal of the density cap (density determinations based on FAR) under the Project. The Project, which would allow an increase in residential and hotel density within the Town's existing commercial zones, would potentially result in a greater buildout of the commercial district and a higher pedestrian presence. Because new development would occur under the Zoning Code's design parameters for street fronts, the Project (the catalyst) would support Goal L.1 of the Land Use Element in that it would contribute to the community's small-town "Main Street" character represented by a more interactive street front. Under the Project, the concentration of new development and higher densities within a defined area of the UGB, which consists of the existing commercial zones along the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road corridors, would be consistent with General Plan Goal L.1 to preserve the Town's compact form. The Project would not result in urban sprawl outside of the defined Project area or cause encroachment into any existing residential neighborhoods, Specific Plan areas, recreational areas, or industrial zones.

The Project could result in the development of a higher concentration of smaller residential units than currently occur in the Town and, as such, would be consistent with General Plan Goal L.2 to substantially increase housing for the Town's workforce. Also, because of zoning regulations that require street front commercial uses along Primary and Secondary Active Frontages in the D and OMR zones, much new development would be mixed use with ground-floor commercial uses. Coupled with pedestrian improvements that would occur with new development, and an increase in people living on or within walking distance of these commercial streets under the Project, the Project would support Goal L.3 to enhance livability of districts for walking through the arrangement of land uses and development intensities. It would also support Policy L.3.B to develop vital retail centers and streets, and Goal L.5 to provide an overall balance of uses, facilities, and services to further the town's role as a destination resort community.

In addition, the Project's concentration of new growth within the Town's existing and defined commercial neighborhoods along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road within the UGB, would be consistent with Goal L.6 to maintain the UGB to ensure a compact urban form, protect natural and outdoor recreational resources, and prevent sprawl.

The Project would amend the Land Use Element to eliminate Policy L.1.A, which establishes a finite maximum population at one time, and would replace it with the adopted PIEC concept, which allows population based on environmental effects. The use of PIEC would ensure that new development would meet the General Plan's stated community vision to protect residents' quality of life and natural surroundings. The PAOT does not account for the geographic distribution of development. However, the Project's removal of the density cap in the Town's well-defined commercial zones is expected to concentrate new growth within the Town center. As such, the Project would support other goals of the General Plan to increase workforce housing and enhance livability of districts for walking through the arrangement of land uses and development intensities (Goals L.2 and L.3), while meeting the objectives of the PIEC to protect residents' quality of life.

The Project would eliminate General Plan Policy L.5.G, which allows modifications to development standards, including an increase in density, for Projects that specifically enhance the tourism, community, and environmental objectives of the Town. Although Policy L.5.G, which is implemented through Community Benefits Incentive Zoning (CBIZ), would allow a doubling of density for hotel, motel, and similar transient lodging Projects, the Project's removal of the density cap for hotel units would also allow an increase in density. Thus, Policy L.5.G (and CBIZ) would no longer be necessary to increase intensity of hotel development. In October 2014, the Town Council eliminated the CBIZ policy, which had been policy adopted under Resolution 09-55. The Project would also eliminate General Plan Action L.3.H.1, requires the preparation of a transfer of development rights (TDR) ordinance that would describe the methods and findings for approving such density transfers. Because the Project's elimination of residential and hotel room density limitations could result in an increase in density at a development site within the commercial districts compared with the existing regulations, the TDR ordinance would not be necessary. As such, the Project would modify Land Use Policy L.3.H to eliminate TDRs between districts. Portions of Policy L.3.H would not be changed since density transfers would still be allowed within Specific Plan zones.

The proposed General Plan amendments would not conflict with the applicable goals of the Land Use Element and the primary objective the Land Use Element, which is to retain community character and small town atmosphere while enhancing the Town's success as a destination through walkable communities, mixed land uses, and other measures. The Project would be consistent with the "overarching principle" of the community to maintain the town's compact urban form, protect natural and outdoor recreation resources, and prevent sprawl. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the objectives of the General Plan Land Use Element.

(3) Mobility Element Update

The intent of the adopted Mobility Element is to achieve an integrated multi-modal transportation system that serves the various needs of residents, employees and visitors and to ensure that Mammoth Lakes will be connected, accessible, uncongested and safe with emphasis on feet first, public transportation second, and car last. As with the adopted Mobility Element, the Mobility Element Update emphasizes a "feet first" policy

and Triple Bottom Line,¹⁰ which is consistent with the objectives of the General Plan. Goals of the Mobility Element Update are as follows:

Goal M.1: Create a safe and efficient “complete streets” network that is based on “feet-first” principles, accommodates all modes of transportation, and serves all users.

Goal M.2: Manage and invest in the transportation system in ways that prioritize flexibility and cost effectiveness and improve the user experience.

Goal M.3: Enhance small town community character through the design of the transportation system.

Goal M.4: Improve snow and ice management to enhance public safety and the operation of the circulation system.

Goal M.5: Maintain and improve safe and efficient movement of people, traffic, and goods in a manner consistent with the “feet-first” initiative while maintaining Level of Service Standards.

Goal M.6: Manage local traffic.

Goal M.7: Effectively manage traffic to provide a safe environment for all road users.

Goal M.8: Support “feet-first” objectives by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter pedestrian system that is safe and comprehensive.

Goal M.9: Provide an attractive and accessible pedestrian environment throughout the Town.

Goal M.10: Support “feet-first” objectives by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter and recreational bicycle-system that is safe and comprehensive:

Goal M.11: Increase bicycle use through improved public education and marketing of the system.

Goal M.12: Provide a year-round public transit system that is convenient and efficient and that increases transit ridership for all trip types:

Goal M.13: Ensure the financial sustainability of transit

Goal M.14: Support alternative transportation, housing affordability, and public health goals through implementation of improved parking strategies and requirements.

Goal M.15: Design parking to meet applicable design goals and minimize negative impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.

¹⁰ *The 2007 General Plan, page 8 states: “The values of the community also encompass making decisions that benefit the community’s social, natural and economic capital – the triple bottom line.”*

Goal M.16: Create a sustainable transportation system that reduces Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and peak period vehicle trips, thereby supporting local and regional air quality, greenhouse gas emission reduction, and public health objectives.

Goal M.17: Use all available tools to make the most effective possible use of the transportation system.

Goal M.18: Improve the regional transportation system

Management strategies of the Mobility Element Update include increasing density in proximity to employment, commercial, and recreational areas to promote walking, transit use, and the “park once” concept; encouraging infill development; implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce traffic; measuring success of transportation management measures; and similar strategies.

The goals (M.1 through M.18) and management strategies of the Mobility Element Update would be consistent with the existing nine goals of the adopted Mobility Element. Goals of the existing Mobility Element include: (M.1) Develop and implement a town-wide way-finding system; (M.2) Improve regional transportation system; (M.3) Emphasize feet first, public transportation second, and car last in planning the community transportation system while still meeting Level of Service standards; (M.4) Encourage feet first by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter trail system that is safe and comprehensive; (M.5) Provide a year-round local public transit system that is convenient and efficient; (M.6) Encourage alternative transportation and improve pedestrian mobility by developing a comprehensive parking management strategy; (M.7) Maintain and improve safe and efficient movement of people, traffic, and goods in a manner consistent with the feet first initiative; and (M.8) Enhance small town community character through the design of the transportation system; and (M.9) Improve snow and ice management, would be implemented and expanded. Although altered (renumbered and expanded), none of the original nine goals would be lost through the adoption of the Mobility Element Update.

In addition, the Mobility Element Update would expand the adopted Mobility Element in that it would manage and invest in the transportation system in ways that prioritize flexibility and cost effectiveness and improve the user experience; enhance small town community character through the design of the transportation system; provide an attractive and accessible pedestrian environment throughout the Town; and support alternative transportation, housing affordability and public health goals through implementation of improved parking strategies and requirements. The Mobility Element Update provides an expanded discussion of mobility issues and presents newer strategies that go beyond, but would not be inconsistent with, the basic list of objectives in the adopted Mobility Element. The Mobility Element Update describes and illustrates the “complete” street network; identifies new street connections, including the Main Street Reconfiguration; and provides detailed discussions and graphics of the Town’s vehicle, bicycle, transit, and parking networks. In addition, the Mobility Element Update describes Transportation Demand Management (TDM), which would meet the objectives of the adopted Mobility Element to increase and improve transportation options and to improve safe and efficient movement of people, traffic, and goods in a manner consistent with the feet first initiative. Because the Project (Mobility Element Update) would not impede the implementation of the mobility goals of the General Plan, it would not conflict with the current General Plan Mobility Element or the goals of the General Plan.

(a) Trails System Master Plan

The Mobility Element Update incorporates the recommended trail system network from the adopted TSMP, as well as a many of the recommendations concerning other multimodal facilities such as sidewalk and bicycle connections and transit service.¹¹ Key goals of the TSMP include (i) develop a plan for an integrated year-round trail network that provides for a seamless transition between the Town of Mammoth Lakes, the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area Mountain Bike Park, and the surrounding federal lands overseen by the USFS; (ii) develop a plan that provides guidance for enhancing year-round mobility in a way that is consistent with the Town's "Feet First" strategy, and (iii) create a plan that clearly identifies the Projects and programs necessary for implementation. Goals, policies and actions of the Mobility Element that reflect the objectives of the TSMP include Goal M.1 to create a safe and efficient "complete streets" network that is based on "feet-first" principles, accommodates all modes of transportation, and serves all users. Policy M.1 it to provide an interconnected network of streets, mid-block connectors, paths, sidewalks, trails, and bike facilities that improve multimodal access, disperse traffic, improve emergency access, and reduce congestion. Mobility Element Update Action M.2.2.1 is to maintain all roadways, paths, sidewalks, and trails in a good state of repair and meet defined Level of Service guidelines for each facility type and Action M.4.1.1 is to update the Town's snow management policy to support "feet-first" objectives, while continuing to maintain public safety as the primary priority, by establishing a town-wide maintenance, grooming and/or snow removal program for streets, sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities to increase year-round accessibility. Because the Mobility Element Update incorporates the goals of and does not conflict with the TSMP it would have a less than significant impact with respect to this adopted plan.

(b) Pedestrian Master Plan

The adopted Pedestrian Master Plan is incorporated into and implements the pedestrian-related goals and policies of the Mobility Element Update. Goals and policies shared by the General Bikeway Master Plan and the Mobility Element Update include the following:

Goal M.8: Support feet-first objectives by providing a linked year round recreational and commuter pedestrian system that is safe and comprehensive.

- **Policy M.8.1:** Ensure all planning processes identify and implement pedestrian improvements and new development improves existing conditions to meet Town standards.
- **Policy M.8.2:** Pursue all available sources of funding for pedestrian improvements, including grant opportunities, assessment districts, and funding through major developers.
- **Policy M.8.3:** Improve pedestrian safety (specific measures are listed in both plans)
- **Policy M.9.1:** Design streets, sidewalks, and trails to promote/ encourage walking and improve accessibility.

¹¹ *Town of Mammoth Lakes Draft Mobility Element, 2011, page 2-13.*

Because the Pedestrian Master Plan is an implementation component of the Mobility Element Update, it would not conflict or be inconsistent with applicable policies of the Pedestrian Master Plan. As such, the Mobility Element Update would have a less than significant impact with respect to this adopted plan.

(c) General Bikeway Master Plan

The adopted General Bikeway Master Plan is incorporated into and implements the bicycle-related goals and policies of the Mobility Element Update. Goals and policies shared by the General Bikeway Master Plan and the Mobility Element Update include the following:

Goal M.10: Support “feet first” objectives by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter bicycle-system that is safe and comprehensive.

- **Policy M.10.1:** Ensure that all planning processes identify and implement bicycle improvements and that new development improves existing conditions to meet town standards.
- **Policy M.10.1:** Ensure that all planning processes identify and implement bicycle improvements and that new development improves existing conditions to meet town standards.
- **Policy M.10.2:** Create a safe and comfortable cycling environment in the town that is accessible to cyclists of all ages.
- **Policy M.10.3:** Continue to support physical and policy-related changes to encourage access to regional and local transit service via bicycle.

Goal M.11: Increase bicycle use through improved public education and marketing of the system.

- **Policy M.11.1:** Support and participate in educational programs and marketing to encourage bicycling.

Because the General Bikeway Master Plan is an implementation component of the Mobility Element Update, it would not conflict or be inconsistent with applicable policies of the Pedestrian Master Plan. As such, the Mobility Element Update would have a less than significant impact with respect to this adopted plan.

b. Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, Title 17

The Project would change Title 17 Sections 17.24.010 (Purpose of Commercial Zones) and 17.24.030 (Commercial Zone Standards) to remove existing limitations on residential and hotel units and to reduce the current maximum FAR. Section 17.24.010 establishes a maximum density of 2.5 FAR and 12 units per acre in the Town’s commercial zones (D, OMR, and MLR). This is further reflected in Table 17.24.030.1, Commercial Districts – Lot Density and Intensity Standards, of the Zoning Code. The FAR (floor area per land area) and density standards (units per acre) would be replaced by a required minimum 0.75 FAR and maximum 2.0 FAR.

The elimination of the hotel room and residential unit cap would allow for more density in the Town’s commercial zones, while the reduction in FAR would reduce the total floor areas to a maximum of twice the

area of a buildable lot (for instance, a 5,000 square-foot lot could net up to 10,000 square feet in floor area). Under current regulations, a 5,000 square-foot lot could net up to 12,500 square feet in floor area. The floor area was reduced to a maximum of 2.0 FAR because prior studies indicated that the 2.5 FAR would potentially generate an unacceptably high number of dwelling and hotel units.

No other requirements of MLMC Title 17 set forth in Sections 17.24.010, 17.24.020, 17.24.030 and 17.24.040 would be changed. Standards such as maximum building heights (55 feet in Downtown and 45 feet on Old Mammoth Road), maximum 10-foot building setbacks, upper story step backs, types of uses, transparency of street facing walls, orientation of and proximity of buildings to the street, landscaping, streetscape, high quality building materials, open space, pedestrian access and sidewalks, and parking would remain as currently presented in the Zoning Code.

The proposed zone change would implement the objectives of the General Plan to create a vibrant mix of retail, commercial and workforce housing. As such, it would support the purpose of the Zoning Code to carry out the goals, objectives and policies of the Mammoth Lakes General Plan and to implement the General Plan. By focusing development within the Town's existing commercial districts, the Project would meet the purpose of the Zoning Code to reduce dependence on the automobile by fostering development that is compact in form and pedestrian-oriented. Also, by containing high-density growth within the Town's commercial sector, the Project would reduce development demand on other areas of the Town and, thus, protect the scenic qualities and natural resources in overall community.

The Mobility Element Update would be consistent with stated purpose of the Zoning Code in that it would encourage a range of transportation options with a strong pedestrian emphasis and emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to use of personal vehicle and reduce dependence on the automobile by fostering development that is compact in form, and pedestrian-oriented. Because the Project would be consistent with the intent of the General Plan, it would be consistent with the objectives of the Zoning Code, the purpose of which is to implement the objectives of the General Plan. As such, impacts with respect to the MLMC would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

The Project would not conflict with applicable objectives of the State of California General Plan Guidelines; the Neighborhood and District Character, Land Use, and Mobility Elements of the adopted Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan; and Title 17 of the Zoning Code. The Mobility Element Update would not conflict with adopted plans. Therefore, land use and planning impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures would be necessary.

Threshold LU-2 The Project would result in a significant impact if the Project would conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

Impact Statement LU-2: *The Project would not conflict with the purposes of the Town's Open Space/Stream Corridor Protection Overlay Zone or with the Inyo National Forest Land Resources and Management Plan. Therefore, impacts related to consistency with the Town's conservation-related regulation and Inyo National Forest Land Resources and Management Plan would be less than significant.*

No conservation plans are specific to areas within the Town of Mammoth Lakes approximately 4.5-square-mile UGB. However, the MLMC Section 17.32 identifies special purpose zoning districts within the UGB, one of which, the Open Space/Stream Corridor Protection Overlay Zone (OSSC) was developed for the purpose of protecting sensitive stream and drainage courses from development. Its purpose is to recognize and preserve the environmentally sensitive area as a community resource and to protect water quality and preserve wetland habitat. This overlay area, which allows single-family uses, is primarily centered on Mammoth Creek and Mammoth Creek Park and is located to the south of the Town's commercial district. As such, it would not be affected by any development within the D, OMR, and MLR zones. Other activities in the OSSC, including pedestrian bridge development at Mammoth Creek Park under the TSMP (incorporated into the Mobility Element Update) would be consistent with the requirements of this overlay zone.

Much of the land within the broader 24-square-mile Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Boundary and approximately 125-square-mile Planning Area (Sphere of Influence) is under the jurisdiction of the Inyo National Forest Service and is subject to the requirements of the Inyo National Forest Land Resources and Management Plan (LRMP). The Town currently maintains several miles of paved multiuse paths on national forest land under a Special Use Permit. Additional multi-use paths are planned in the National Forest area under the adopted Town of Mammoth Lakes TSMP and are anticipated under the Mobility Element Update. As described in the EIR prepared for the Town of Mammoth Lakes TSMP, multi-use paths and other trails would be consistent with applicable LRMP policies, interpretive and informational sites and trails, off-highway vehicle (OHV)/over-snow vehicle (OSV) management, trail opportunities in the Lakes Basin, and trails connecting national Forest lands to the Town.¹² Because trail improvements on National Forest lands would be consistent with the LRMP, land use impacts associated with plan consistency would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

The Project would be consistent with applicable land use plans, regulations, and conservation-related plans and policies. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

4. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts would be associated with the development of the Town's commercial area in combination with non-commercial related Projects under the build-out of the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan. It is anticipated that all related Projects would be reviewed by the Town's Community and Economic Development Department, Planning Division. Such review would determine consistency with land use and zoning regulations as expressed in the 2007 General Plan and MLMC the Zoning Code. In addition, potential impacts of all new development Projects would be assessed on a Project-by-Project basis through PIEC and/or environmental review, including but not limited to evaluations of land use and other areas of environmental concern. The impacts-based approach would ensure that growth in the Town would not violate zoning and land use regulations or exceed the carrying capacity of infrastructure or other constraints. With compliance with the PIEC and existing regulations, land use impacts with respect to cumulative, related Projects combined with the proposed Project would be less than significant.

¹² *Town of Mammoth Lakes, Draft Trails System Master Plan Environmental Impact Report, July 11, 2011, Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning.*

5. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The Project would result in less than significant impacts with regard to applicable land use plans, regulations, and conservation-related plans and policies as well as Plan consistency.

The Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update would not conflict with the objectives of the Town's General Plan. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be necessary. Impacts regarding land use and planning would be less than significant.