



## North Old Mammoth Road - District Special Study Town of Mammoth Lakes

September 21, 2007



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## 1. NORTH OLD MAMMOTH ROAD DISTRICT

### District Plan Regulatory Background

In June, 2007, the Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Council adopted a policy which requires a “District Plan” for all Major Land Use Development Permits (that are proposing to change code) to be used in considering the permit application. District Planning is defined as “...the analysis and planning of a larger geographic area surrounding a Permit Application. District Planning Areas will be defined around a Permit Application to analyze the context of surrounding areas and neighborhoods that can be reasonably determined to relate to, and be affected by, the subject application through aesthetics, land use, density, population, mobility, or public service infrastructure.” The North Old Mammoth Road District is considered to be first of the Planning Studies and has been initiated by the Clearwater Development Proposal (Metric Holdings, Inc.).

While the District Plan was initiated by the Clearwater development, its context is much broader. This planning study is not a design proposal for the Clearwater properties, but a planning framework for implementation through Clearwater or any other applicant’s development review and discretionary approval process with Town staff, Planning Commission and Town Council.

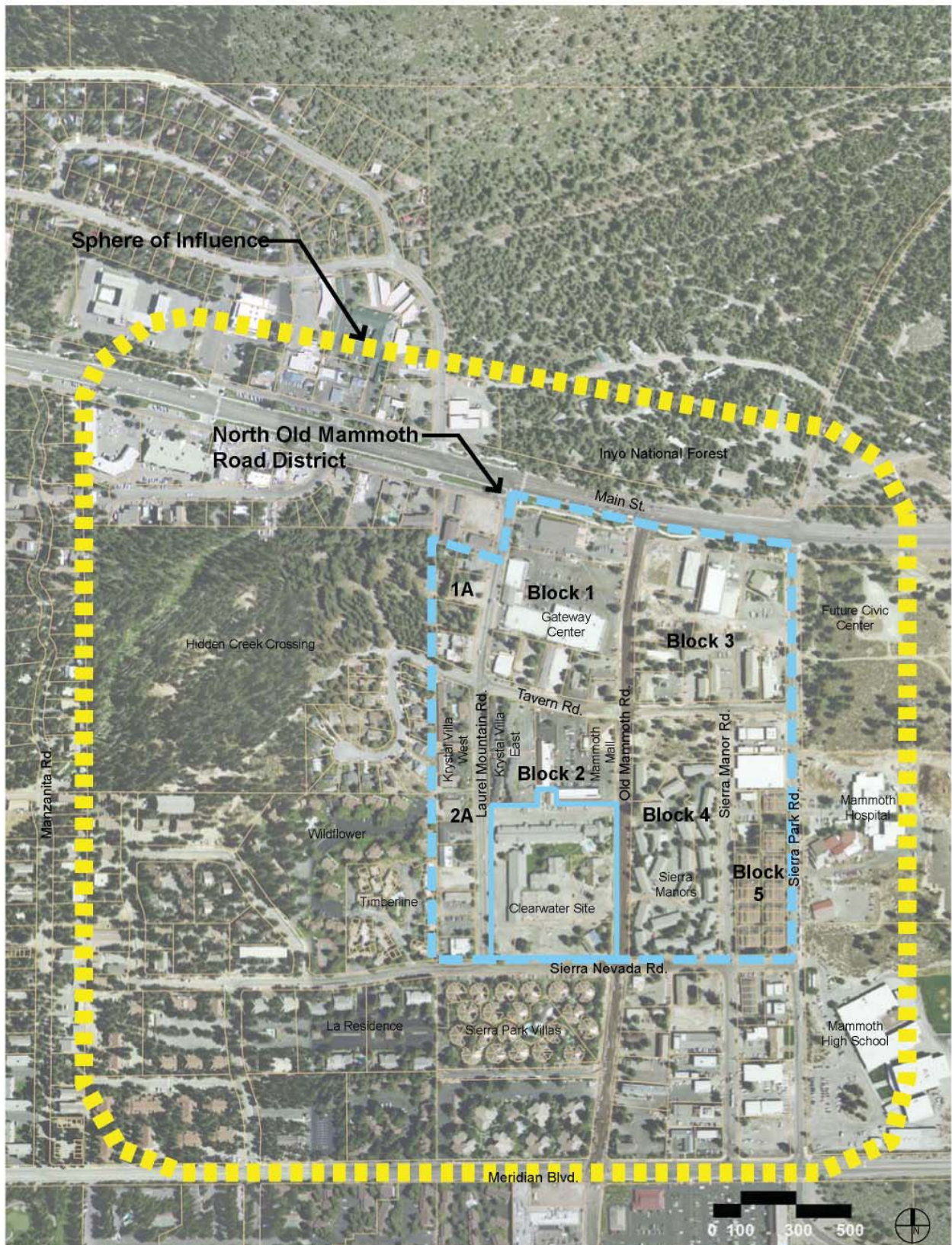
### Community Process

The District Plan and the Clearwater site have had three community meetings. The first was held as a special Planning Commission Workshop on April 25, 2007, the second as a Neighborhood Café Meeting on July 23, 2007; and a second Planning Commission Workshop on August 29, 2007. In each case, public comment was substantial. The summary of meeting notes can be found in Appendix 1.

Opinions were diverse, and many comments at the initial meeting concentrated on the Clearwater project with a concern for its height (107 feet maximum at that time), density, traffic, and more urban character. There was concern about both blocking of views as well as casting shadows on existing residents and streets. While some expressed desire to see a more village like character and the elimination of the strip malls, others feared that even new retail could be vacant if not properly designed.

Community members met again in July at a Neighborhood Café Meeting to discuss all of Old Mammoth Road in general rather than any specific project. Again, comments were diverse and ranged from general to specific. There was a desire to see retail diversify, so that locals use the area, as well as to see the District become attractive for visitors to walk between their lodging and a restaurant. There was an agreement that Old Mammoth Road should be a walking street and





North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 1: Vicinity Diagram

the land uses and design must support that goal. There was also concern about the automobile traffic on Old Mammoth Road in particular. Good design and public spaces, potentially pocket parks were called out as desired improvements. There was again the desire to see buildings no higher than three stories, with retail on the ground floor and residential above. The need to develop a sense of arrival and destinations, be they clusters of theater, entertainment, galleries, or restaurants, was identified. Again, transportation, views, safe routes to school, and traffic calming were all important concerns.

The third public forum was conducted in August at a special Planning Commission meeting with the introduction to the District Plan's findings. There was concern that the District Plan not endorse any specific development proposal, that the surrounding context is addressed as to how it affects and is affected by the North Old Mammoth Road District, and how the edges can be seamless. More specific concerns addressed alternatives presented, particularly height and massing. There were comments with regards to developing a logical system for bicycle use as well as pedestrian use; the desire to see a better entry way into town, and the need for Mammoth appropriate design.

Complete meeting minutes and notes are provided in Appendix 1.

### **North Old Mammoth Road District Planning Area Boundaries**

The North Old Mammoth Road District area was established by the Planning Commission at its meeting of August 8, 2007 and is defined as two components: the specific district "Special Study" area and the "Sphere of Influence" area. The "Special Study" area comprises approximately 48 acres (of which approximately 39 acres are in private property and 9 acres in street right of way) and includes the area between Main Street/SR 203 (northern edge); Sierra Nevada Street (southern edge); Sierra Park Road (eastern edge) and the properties facing Laurel Mountain Road (western edge). At the Planning Commission hearing establishing the Planning Area, Commissioners requested that the area be enlarged to include its relationship to the surrounding context, or what is called a "Sphere of Influence." This Sphere of Influence area includes the areas north above Main Street/SR 203; the areas east of Sierra Park Road, in particular the properties considered for a future civic center (Sierra Park Road at Tavern Road), the Mammoth Hospital (Sierra Park Road between Tavern Road and Sierra Nevada Road) and Mammoth High School (Sierra Park Road and Meridian Boulevard); the areas south of Sierra Nevada Road, including the commercial properties north of Meridian Boulevard; and the areas west of Laurel Mountain Road to east of Manzanita Road, including the Hidden Creek Crossing development proposal site. (See Figure 1)



## District Characteristics

Today, the North Old Mammoth Road District is comprised of five major blocks, as well as properties on the west side facing Laurel Mountain Road.<sup>1</sup> The study blocks have been numbered for purposes of this plan only and are described in general as:



Study Block 1, the northwestern most block, is bounded by Main Street/SR 203 on the north; Old Mammoth Road on the east; Tavern Road on the south, and; Laurel Mountain Road on the west. The block is very large and about 6.7 acres (290,000 square feet in area, approximately 450 feet x 650 feet). There are 9 properties, with the larger properties at the north and the smaller properties along Tavern Road. Existing land uses are primarily commercial, including large retailers with a mix of residential. The development pattern is one of a mixed size of retail uses and service parking at the north (Gateway Center) and various smaller commercial buildings along Tavern Road, where properties range from .14 to .41 acres. Most all of the lots are fully developed, with a limited remnant of forest trees along property boundaries. Bank of America, Rite Aid, and Footloose Sporting Goods are among the major tenants. While Old Mammoth Road has sidewalks, there are very limited sidewalks along the west and south portions of the block; the northern edge has a curving pedestrian path in the greenbelt edge of Main Street.

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<sup>1</sup> All dimensions and areas given are approximate and for planning purposes only; specific parcel information should be confirmed with assessors' maps for recorded area and survey coordinates.



Study Block 1A is immediately west of Study Block 1 and faces Laurel Mountain Road. There are 5 properties, (the properties at Main Street/SR 203 are excluded). Again, the block is long, approximately 650 feet, and is comprised of approximately 2.75 acres, of which approximately 2 acres are within this district. The majority of the properties are developed with condominiums or other small developments. Some lots are undeveloped and wooded. There are no sidewalks along Laurel Mountain Road.



Study Block 2 is bounded by Tavern Road on the north; Old Mammoth Road on the east; Sierra Nevada Road on the south; and Laurel Mountain Road on the west. The block is very large, approximately 10.2 acres (441,600 square feet in area, approximately 480 feet x 920 feet). There are currently 7 parcels, the majority fairly large or under consolidated ownership. The Krystal Villa East condominiums are at Laurel Mountain Road and Tavern Road. Mammoth Mall, a retail center, occupies a large (nearly 2 acre) site fronting both Tavern Road and Old Mammoth Road and the Charchouse Restaurant is located on a third of an acre site at the corner of Tavern and Old Mammoth Roads. The southern half of the block, approximately 6 acres, is known as “The Clearwater.” A Specific Plan for The Clearwater (Metric Holdings, Inc.) development is under review by the Town. Current uses include the Rodeway Inn, and the former Igor’s and Ocean Harvest restaurants. There are very limited remnants of forest trees, primarily along the property edges. Sidewalks can be found along Old Mammoth Road, but not the other roads.





Study Block 2A is immediately west of Study Block 2 and faces Laurel Mountain Road. There are 8 properties within the long block, in an area approximately 2.8 acres (approximately 1020 feet long by 120 feet deep). Krystal Villa West condominiums face the corner at Laurel Mountain Road and Tavern Road and most of the remainder of the block is composed of small condominium/apartment developments with surface parking. One lot is vacant. A commercial establishment is at the corner of Laurel Mountain Road and Sierra Nevada Road. Throughout the entire block there are very limited remnants of forest trees and no sidewalks.



Study Block 3, the northeastern block, is bounded by Main Street/SR 203 on the north; Sierra Park Road on the east; Tavern Road on the south, and; Old Mammoth Road on the west. The block is also large, about 7.5 acres (350,000 square feet in area, approximately 550 feet x 600 feet). There are 11 parcels of varying sizes. Existing land uses include a service station on the corner of Main Street and Old Mammoth Road, the Shilo Inn along Old Mammoth Road, McDonald's restaurant at the corner of Main Street and Sierra Park Road, and a variety of commercial venues along Tavern Road. Parking is all on the surface with the exception of the Shilo Inn, which has garage parking. The block is heavily developed, with remnants of forest trees along the Main Street frontage as well as along a few properties along Old Mammoth Road. Again, there are very limited and inconsistent sidewalks along the south and east portions of the block; the western edge has a sidewalk along Old Mammoth Road and the northern edge has a curving pedestrian path in the greenbelt edge of Main Street.



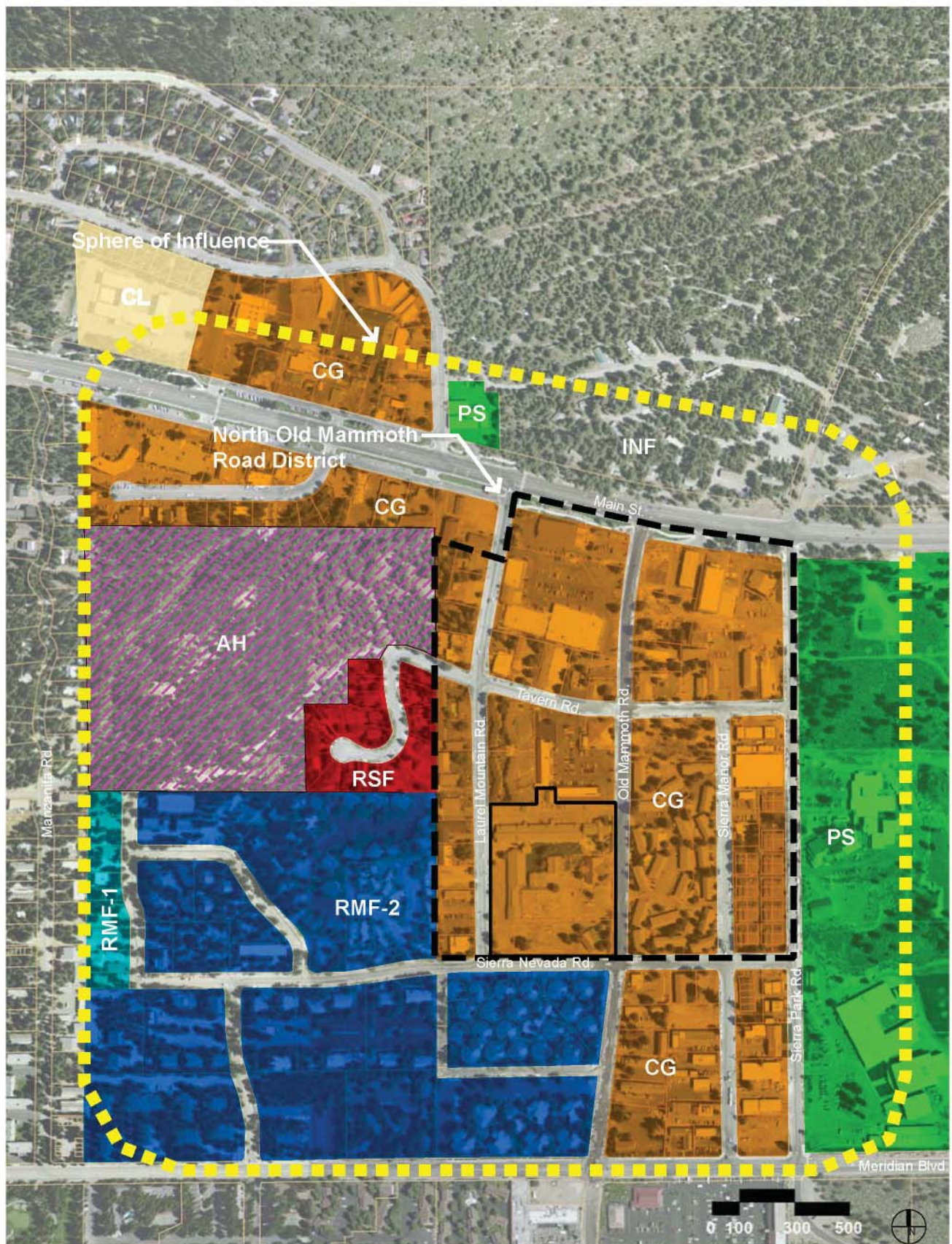
Study Block 4 is bounded by Tavern Road on the north; Sierra Manor Road on the east; Sierra Nevada Road on the south; and Old Mammoth Road on the west. The block is very long, approximately 6.6 acres (or 288,000 square feet in area, approximately 320 feet wide x 900 feet long). The northern parcel along Tavern Road is owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a Park & Ride lot. Immediately to the south are the Sierra Manor Condominiums. While the entire block is developed, there is a fair amount of remnant forest within the condominiums.



Study Block 5 is immediately to the east and is bounded by Tavern Road on the north; Sierra Park Road on the east; Sierra Nevada Road on the south; and Sierra Park Road on the west. The block is also very long but much narrower, approximately 4.1 acres (or 180,000 square feet in area, approximately 200 feet wide x 900 feet long). The block is developed with Tavern Business Park, other commercial land uses, and condominiums. There are no sidewalks.







CG	Commercial (General)
CL	Commercial (Lodging)
PS	Public Space
RMF-1	Residential Multi Family 1
RMF-2	Residential Multi Family 2
RSF	Residential Single Family
AH	Affordable Housing
INF	Inyo National Forest

North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 2: Zoning Designations

## Urban Design Characteristics

Each district contributes its own character to the overall Town of Mammoth Lakes and the North Old Mammoth Road District is no exception. Traditionally the intersection of Main Street and Old Mammoth Road signified the entry into town. Most commercial retail development is located along Main Street or along Old Mammoth Road. The majority of existing commercial development are “strip malls” or suburban shopping centers. These are geared to the automobile, with large surface parking lots on most parcels. Retail in the area has had various levels of success over the years. Residential development is primarily multi-family in either large complexes or smaller 6- and 8-units. The majority of residential buildings are two stories tall. Again, the preponderance is for surface parking rather than garages. The District is not defined by any one establishment, natural feature or distinguished architecture and is somewhat nondescript, especially to visitors. However, it does sit at a prominent location in Town and could be developed with a better sense of place and contribution to the Mammoth residents.

## Regulatory Context

**General Plan:** The Town of Mammoth Lakes adopted a new General Plan in August of 2007. It forms the policy direction for the Town as a whole and specifically this District. The General Plan outlines the vision, values, and goals for the Economy; Arts/Culture/Heritage/Natural History; Community Design; Neighborhood and District Character; Land Use; Mobility; Parks/Open Space/Recreation; Resource Management/Conservation, and; Public Health/Safety. Many of the policies directly and indirectly relate to this District and can be found outlined in Appendix 2.

**Zoning Code:** Zoning implements the General Plan through a classification of the specific, immediate allowed land uses. The entire North Old Mammoth Road District is zoned CG – Commercial General. Pursuant to the Municipal Code; “This zone is intended as an area for the location of office uses, retail and wholesale commercial activities, and such other business or activities which offer services to both permanent residents and visitors.” (See Figure 2)


**Property Development Standards:** The Municipal Code also regulates the property development standards in this zone. These include density, setbacks, height, and lot coverage, as well as a number of other conditions.

As stated in the Code, the allowed density is forty (40) guest rooms per net acre for hotels, motels, and fractional-use projects within the CG Zone.

The front yard setbacks in this zone are 20 feet, with a 10-foot front yard setback allowed if a





 Building heights at 35' (45' with discretionary approval and underground parking)

North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 3: Existing Allowed Building Heights



maintenance district is formed for public snow removal; if parking is located to the rear of the structure, and if the affected property participates in the snow removal maintenance district. Side and rear yard setbacks are not required, unless on a street frontage, where they remain at 20 feet.

The maximum permitted lot coverage in the CG zone is 70% of the gross lot area.

Height in this zone is limited to 35 feet (See Figure 3). The Code allows that for any commercial structure in which the majority of the ground floor is devoted to understructure parking, the Planning Commission may approve a ten foot increase for under-structure parking.

For further detail and currently allowed uses, please refer to the Municipal Code, Title 17, Zoning.



Old Mammoth Road looking north from Sierra Nevada Road.



Old Mammoth Road looking south from Main Street.



Tavern Road looking east from Laurel Mountain Road.



Sierra Manor Road looking north from Sierra Nevada Road.



## 2. CONTEXT

### Sphere of Influence

The sphere of influence includes an approximately quarter mile radius from the study area to include areas of large local, second home, and visitor populations, portions of Main Street, Forest Service Land, and the major community facilities of the high school, hospital, and future Town Civic Center (refer to Figure 1). These areas highly influence the District Plan area, in that the District provides for the walkable commercial districts for many of these residents, area views, the direct routes to school, the co-location opportunities with civic and community serving uses, and a synergy with existing retail. While the sphere of influence is quite diverse in its character, its proximity provides for many opportunities for the North Old Mammoth Road District, such as employment, civic, retail and school destinations, and Forest Service recreational open space.

**Zoning Context:** While the North Old Mammoth Road District is entirely zoned CG - Commercial General, the context zoning in the sphere of influence is very diverse (refer to Figure 2). The properties northwest of the District facing Main Street, the Frontage Road, and Center Street are also Commercial General, with a very limited portion of CL - Commercial Lodging on the far western edge of the sphere of influence. The property immediately north of the district includes a small parcel of PS – Public Space (site of the new fire station), and the remainder is Forest Service land and is not subject to zoning.

Immediately to the east of Sierra Park Road the zoning is entirely PS – Public Space where it encompasses the hospital and schools. South of the district, east of Old Mammoth Road to Sierra Park Road, the zoning is CG - Commercial General. West of Old Mammoth Road and south of the District to Meridian Boulevard, the zoning is RMF-2 - Residential Multi Family (multiple family units that allow transient occupancy with a use permit). Likewise, the area immediately west of the District along Arrowhead Drive is also zoned RMF-2 - Residential Multi Family. North of the RMF-2 - Residential Multi Family zone are two separate residential zones, a RSF - Residential Single Family zone along Shady Rest Road to Tavern Road and a larger area zoned AF - Affordable Housing along Tavern Road, which is commonly referred to as Hidden Creek Crossing.

**Town Entrance/District Entrance:** The entryway into the Town of Mammoth Lakes is along SR 203/Main Street and the first development encountered is within the North Old Mammoth Road District. The first stoplight along SR 203 from Highway 395 is at the Old Mammoth Road and Main Street intersection, forming an implied entrance. However, the northern side of Main Street at the District is under Forest Service jurisdiction and is developed as recreational areas, creating a one-sided “entrance.”



Within the District, the District Entrance is formed at Old Mammoth Road near Main Street. Currently it is developed with retail establishments and does not highlight any entryway in terms of signage, coordinated architectural features, or landscape features.

There are many opportunities to create a District Entrance along Old Mammoth Road near the intersection of Main Street. Architectural features, a coordinated landscape and streetscape treatment, as well as district signage, could emphasize the North Old Mammoth Road District.

**Adjacent Commercial Activity:** Main Street is one of the major commercial/retail districts in town. It is comprised of a mix of individual buildings or small suburban-style shopping centers, many of which were built as “roadside commercial” along SR 203. Frontage roads are on both sides of Main Street, accessing multiple properties. There are a number of lodging, service stations, and commercial uses on the north side while the south side is dominated by restaurants and retail uses, with parking along the frontage road.

The North Old Mammoth Road District commercial is envisioned as very different from the Main Street commercial, and should be designed to promote a synergy between the two areas. Main Street serves many of the transient visitors efficiently on their way to and from the mountain. The North Old Mammoth Road District is an opportunity to better serve local, seasonal, and transient residents as well as visitors in a walking environment. The two areas should complement each other, with one being geared more to its highway location and the other, North Old Mammoth Road, encouraging the pedestrian foot traffic as the primary mode of travel.

**Residential Relationships:** The many different residential uses that surround the North Old Mammoth Road District will provide the substantial residential base to support the district retail and commercial uses envisioned in the district. The future affordable housing to the west (on the Hidden Creek Crossing site) and the existing single and multi-family housing to the west and south are all within a short (under ¼ mile) walk to commercial development in the district. With no local services in these residential districts, the North Old Mammoth Road corridor will be the primary local serving commercial/retail within walking distance.

Sidewalks in the District should be continuous to give pedestrians easy access to and through the District from the surrounding residential areas. Likewise, the mix of retail uses should recognize the nearby residential population as their market base.

**Public Space:** The uses east of Sierra Park Road are all public and institutional uses, including the Mammoth High School at Meridian Boulevard and Mammoth Hospital between Tavern and Sierra Nevada Roads. They are both employment bases which could complement the commercial and retail developments within the North Old Mammoth Road District. A future civic center is envisioned north of Tavern Road, which would create another center of employment as well as community services.

**Forest Service Lands:** U.S. Forest Service lands lie immediately north of the district, and outside the jurisdiction of the Town. These lands are for the most part undeveloped, with the exception of recreational areas and camping areas and their supporting uses. The dense tree canopy forms the visual terminus of Old Mammoth Road, tying the district further into its natural surroundings. It is important that this view corridor remains open to the forest lands and the Knolls above as a characteristic of the mountain town.



Forest Service lands to the north of Main Street.



Sierra Park Road civic and institutional uses to the east and southeast of the District.

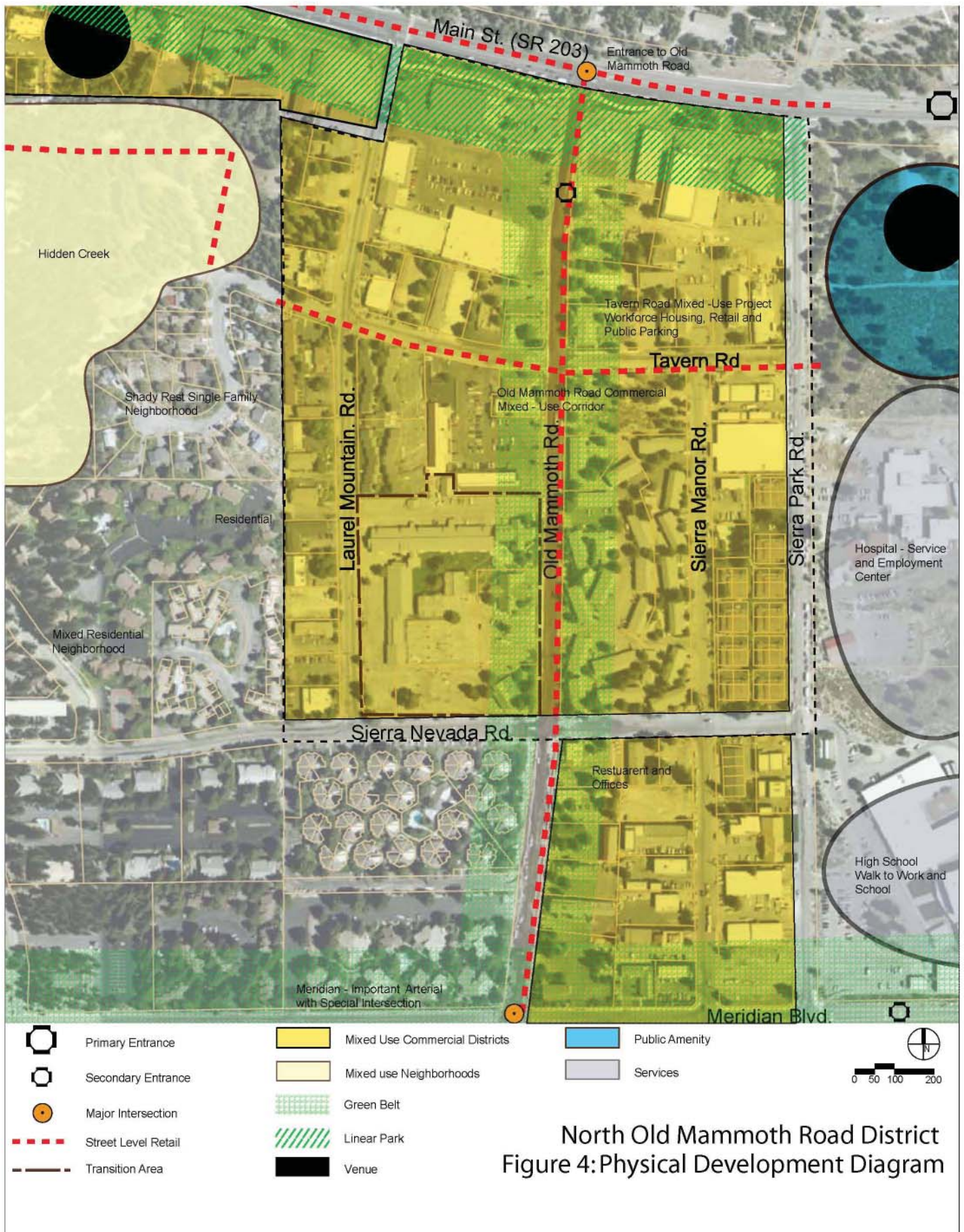


Sierra Nevada Road residential, just south of the District.



Main Street commercial district, north and west of the District.





North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 4: Physical Development Diagram



### 3. DISTRICT OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

The approximately 48-acre study area offers many opportunities to the Mammoth Lakes community as well as constraints to development. While particular development opportunities and constraints may exist on any one particular site, the intention in this District Special Study is to outline and assess the overarching opportunities and constraints within the District. To that end, the principles of the Town, as expressed in the 2007 General Plan and the 2006 Physical Development & Mobility Study (See Figure 4), form the basis for this analysis. These many principles are summarized into three categories:

1. Creating Walkable Communities
2. Maintaining Mountain Town Character
3. Providing Economic Viability

#### 1. Creating Walkable Communities:

The goal of creating walkable communities underlies many of the policies and actions of the planning and regulatory documents in Mammoth Lakes. Mammoth Lakes has adopted a “feet first” direction – encouraging pedestrian, non-motorized traffic and transit over private automobiles and limiting vehicular trips by concentrating uses into walkable (approximately ¼ mile) centers supported by residential population. “Placemaking”, the process of creating vital public interests and destinations, is critical to creating this walkable district.<sup>2</sup>

**Opportunity:** The North Old Mammoth Road District is a model neighborhood to employ the principles of “placemaking.” The area is beginning to undergo change, which could promote better destinations and public spaces and serve as a catalyst for other revitalization.

**Constraint:** Currently there is no public space within the District and very little public activities that attract people other than retail or lodging destination. Planned public spaces will be necessary for creating a vital and active district. The old pattern of strip malls with large seas of surface parking along the street does not promote either the goals of walkability or “placemaking.”

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2 “Placemaking is not just the act of building or fixing up a space, but a whole process that fosters the creation of vital public destinations: the kind of places where people feel a strong stake in their communities and a commitment to making things better. Simply put, Placemaking capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness, and well being. As our survey responses suggest, this process is essential--even sacred--to people who truly care about the places in their lives.” Project for Public Spaces/PPS website [http://www.pps.org/info/bulletin/what\\_is\\_placemaking](http://www.pps.org/info/bulletin/what_is_placemaking)



- Existing Pedestrian Sidewalk (6'-0")
- Existing Main Street Promenade

North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 5: Existing Sidewalks



**Opportunity:** The North Old Mammoth Road District is the ideal location to create a vital pedestrian center and an area of higher activity. It is close to many residential communities and services. Topography is generally flat, the overall system of streets has established an ease of circulation, and it is already seen by locals and part-time residents as a village center – albeit partial and in need of vitality. New development could promote a walkable community and serve as a catalyst for further revitalization. Mid block connectors, be they pedestrian corridors or streets, could promote more walkability.

**Constraint:** While excellent in terms of geography and proximity, the North Old Mammoth Road District does not offer continuous sidewalks, pleasurable street environments, or even small blocks that would encourage walkable districts. Sidewalks are non-existent in the majority of the study area except along Old Mammoth Road, and front yard parking stalls back directly onto the street in many places (See Figure 5). The large blocks (over 1000 feet in some cases) discourage pedestrians from walking to the district or through the district to neighboring schools and employment. These large blocks should be broken into smaller increments with either additional streets or “mid-block” pedestrian connections. The majority of the housing and retail frontages sit far from any sidewalk and is oriented to large surface parking lots. Building orientation should reinforce the pedestrian character and be geared to the streetscape and sidewalks instead.

**Opportunity:** Mammoth Lakes enjoys a very outdoor-oriented climate. In spring, summer, and fall, areas that receive sun and are buffered from wind are desirable places to walk or gather. Even in winter, the amount of sunny, mild days outnumber the harsh ones and people gravitate to sunny gathering spots to enjoy the brisk mountain air.

**Constraint:** Sidewalks are virtually non-existent in the neighborhood with the exception of Old Mammoth Road and small portions of other streets. Outdoor dining, very desirable during the summer and shoulder seasons (and even some sunny days in winter), is non-existent with the exception of one restaurant patio in the back of a parking lot. Current development patterns do not promote places for gathering or outdoor dining. Outdoor dining should be encouraged along the streetscapes in western and southern exposures where they would have most sun. Sidewalks have not been designed with their solar exposure in mind. Wider sidewalks on sunny street frontages will encourage more activity throughout the year. Currently, the allowable building heights (35 feet to 45 feet with discretionary review) do not take into account the impact on solar gain in these pedestrian areas.

**Opportunity:** A walkable center is reinforced with parking “reservoirs” so that people are encouraged to “park once” and walk to the many retail, restaurant, or service establishments within the district. The “park once” concept allows off-site parking reservoirs for shared parking and joint

use of facilities and parking. For visitors, it will also be especially important for them to leave their cars for the majority of in-town activities. The North Old Mammoth Road District has the ability to create “park-once” reservoirs in the cores of the larger blocks and underneath redeveloping parcels. There is also a dedicated public parking lot (Town owned Park & Ride lot) at the southeast corner of Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road which has capacity to support more retail activity in a shared parking arrangement. The area would also respond well to a Transportation/ Parking Management Plan – a coordinated plan that would address demand and provision on a district level.

**Constraint:** While the District has large areas of surface parking currently, it is entirely surface parking and fragmented into smaller strip centers or, in the case of smaller properties, into small lots along the streetscape. The area will remain fragmented until parking can be thought about holistically within the district.

**Opportunity:** Mobility is increased with the provision of additional modes of transportation. Logical bicycle routes should connect destinations in this district to surrounding attractions. Transit and shuttle bus stops should be easily accessible and serve development clusters.

## 2. Maintaining Mountain Town Character:

The goal of maintaining a mountain town character is important to the identity and marketing of Mammoth Lakes as a premier mountain resort town. The General Plan describes the town “...as a village in the trees.” Many elements make up the mountain character, including the forest, access to views and sun, conditions for snow removal and snow melt, and architectural style and streetscape character.

**Opportunity:** The pine forest canopy is an important characteristic of the mountain resort atmosphere cherished in Mammoth Lakes. Mammoth’s image is derived from its views of forests and mountains. The trees also contribute to the pine scent and sound of rustling wind as well as their visual benefits. The forest also serves to “scale” development and mitigates visual intrusion by nestling within the forest canopy rather than protruding out of the tree cover. The North Old Mammoth Road district, because of its prior development, has limited remnants of the original tree canopy; yet for the most part, those trees that remain are tall (45 feet to 75 feet on average; with some specimens reaching over 100 feet). The General Plan, in its Community Design section, states that building heights should be kept within the tree canopy.



**Constraint:** In many areas of the District, the remnant pine forest is limited or scattered. Rather than large stands of trees that traditionally constitute a forest, there are individual specimens or small clusters. While many of these trees are large, they are not continuous stands. Development intensity often limits the ability to preserve these trees. New trees, if planted above structure, will rarely meet the height or character of trees in native soil. If extensive underground parking is proposed over entire sites, it could cause the removal of the existing trees and inhibit development of tall stands of new vegetation.

**Opportunity:** Sunny days outweigh overcast days in Mammoth Lakes (average 300 sunny days per year or 82%<sup>3</sup>). To promote year-round activity, sunlight is encouraged at the street level and open spaces in the district. Sunlight and solar access can be brought into the streetscape through the use of building siting and stepping of heights.

**Constraint:** Existing properties surrounding and within the district also enjoy a pattern of sun and shade now, which should be reasonably maintained. Height, setback, and step-backs will be critical to preserving existing solar access.

**Constraint:** While Mammoth Lakes enjoys a good portion of sunny or partially sunny days, winter snows can amount to substantial amounts. Over the last ten years, snowfall on Mammoth Mountain has ranged from 230 inches to 660 inches, and averages 427 inches per year. Snow storage and snow removal is critical to all site development. Adequate area must be set aside for snow storage. Sidewalks, street sections, and setbacks must take into account snow removal methods.

**Opportunity:** Old Mammoth Road provides a designated public view corridor to both the north (to the Knolls) and the south (to the Sherwins). These open space views from the public right-of-way are highly prized and help to create the mountain town feeling. New developments should retain these public views and highlight them as part of their mountain character. Public views also exist to the east and west along the east/west streets, most prominently west to Mammoth Mountain. While not officially designated public viewsheds, these views contribute to the town character and efforts should be made to not block them from the public view.

**Constraint:** View corridors must be respected and enhanced, including setbacks and stepbacks to increase or retain the viewsheds. North/south and east/west streets should not be blocked so as to maintain these mountain views.





- Existing Circulation
- Proposed Connection
- Mid-block Pedestrian Connection
- Pedestrian Oriented Street

- Commercial Opportunity Sites:
- Mixed Use- Retail Commerical
  - Ground Level Retail with Residential/ Lodging/Office Above
  - Parking
  - Study Area

- Retail With Parking Below Grade
- Public Plaza

0 50 100 200

North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 6 : "Strategic Concept" ERA Report



**Opportunity:** Architectural style in Mammoth Lakes, while currently diverse, is defined in the Town's Design Guidelines Manual. Architecture will contribute to the uniqueness of Mammoth Lakes as well as the specific site through careful design and sensitivity to the mountain character.

### 3. Providing Economic Viability:

Mammoth Lakes desires to be more of a year-round destination, especially strengthening the shoulder seasons. The development economics firm Economics Research Associates (ERA) produced a report summary in August 2007 citing the ability to support more commercial within the community, specifically commercial that would appeal to local and seasonal residents as well as tourists (See Figure 6). The area identified for this higher concentration (called a Town Center in the ERA report) was focused around the intersection of Tavern Road and Old Mammoth Road. It also stressed the need for a mix of uses in this area, including residential and lodging, to support the retail. It encouraged the inclusion of conference facilities with lodging to expand the Town's marketing attraction.

**Opportunity:** The district is zoned Commercial General and currently allows commercial development. Commercial development should be required on the ground floor of the major streets (Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road) to support the pedestrian walkability. According to the ERA report, approximately 270,000 square feet of retail could be supported by 2020 within this district.

**Opportunity:** Mixed use could support both commercial/retail on the ground floor with residential/lodging/office above.

**Constraint:** Public parking (garage or rear surface lot) and on-street public parking is necessary to support retail environments. While this area can serve many by foot, it also needs to provide adequate parking. Currently, there is virtually no on-street public parking within the district. This is compounded by many of the district's residential developments having front-yard private parking, which eliminates the potential for any on-street private parking due to the driveways. Parking garages, with public parking will be necessary to maximize the available parking without burdening the retail sites. Parking demand for the retail (270,000 square feet) is estimated at 540 to 675 spaces.<sup>4</sup>

4 1 stall per 400 or 500 square feet of commercial space, depending on the use.





## 4. DISTRICT GOALS

The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan 2007 has stated the District Goals as well as defined the Community Character<sup>5</sup>. This adopted document forms the goals for the District as well as establishes the community character and programmatic goals and is quoted herein.

The General Plan defines the district program opportunities in the following:

*“For the successful and sustainable development of the community, each district should provide different recreation and leisure opportunities, uses, facilities and activities. Each district should add to and complement the community’s overall resort offerings and be programmed to serve the community as well as increase midweek and shoulder season visitation. Program opportunities include but are not limited to:*

- *Convention and conference facilities*
- *Performance and cinema theaters*
- *Anchor retail and entertainment uses*
- *An indoor four seasons field house, skating rink, and swimming facility*
- *Expanded golf and tennis facilities*
- *In-town state-of-the-art Nordic Ski center facility*
- *Improved equestrian facilities*
- *Open space*
- *Plazas and special events areas*
- *Arts, culture and heritage facilities*
- *Public parking facilities*
- *Market rate workforce housing*
- *Child and infant care facilities”*

The General Plan also defines the district goals with the following language:

*“The Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest areas should invite pedestrian activity and provide gathering places and opportunities for interaction in a vibrant mix of retail, commercial, and workforce housing. Development should be attractive with a high level of detail and active storefront uses resulting in a pleasing pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Commercial corridors should be walkable year-round, vibrant, colorful, and accessible. Uses should be mixed to allow offices, residential housing and visitor accommodations above ground floor retail. Buildings*

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5 Town of Mammoth Lake General Plan 2007, page 24 and 25

*should have distinctive mountain architecture and varied roof forms with accentuating physical landmarks at intersections, street corners and other appropriate locations. The streetscape should be safe and designed for the pedestrian with the inclusion of street furniture, trees, flowers and planters, interesting sidewalk surfaces and public art. New development should improve connectivity and circulation with bike and pedestrian paths, sidewalks and roads.*

***General characteristics:***

- 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*

***Old Mammoth Road characteristics:***

- 1. Traditional small-scale mixed use “Main Street” development pattern”*

For a summary of the General Plan goals and relative District sections, please see Appendix 2 or refer to the adopted document.



## 5. DISTRICT ALTERNATIVES

The North Old Mammoth Road district is one of the areas within town that will experience the most change over the next two decades. Alternatives illustrate how that change could occur based upon a series of conditions.

### A. Existing Development Pattern

Currently the existing development pattern is controlled by zoning and grandfathered uses. Assuming that new development would follow the current patterns, one could expect to have individual parcel developments that had the following characteristics:

- Two-story to three-story development is built at an average maximum height of 35 feet, with new development achieving 45 feet (four story) if allowed by Town.
- Required parking is contained on site, mostly on grade, with minimal incentive to underground (and inability to underground on smaller lots).
- Streets would remain as currently designed.
- Sidewalks are installed only at new developments along street edge. Additional pedestrian connections or a finer grain of streets with more walkable blocks would be difficult to achieve with current development pattern.
- Set back from the property line is 20 feet, regardless of the street frontage.
- Lot coverage is up to 70%.
- While new development would not be allowed to have front yard parking, existing development would continue to have front yard parking and non-continuous sidewalks.

While the existing scenario could allow commercial development within the district, the ERA study stated that it would be unlikely. The existing scenario also does not encourage a mixed-use scenario that could reinforce the goals of the Town, its mobility element and the walkable community “feet first” direction.

Another option would be based upon the current zoning and no additional density allowed by the Town. This scenario would encourage two story units that would utilize surface parking and could attain up to a maximum of 40 units per acre. There is little incentive for current properties to undergo change and implement the goals of the General Plan. The critical mix and massing of retail, residential, and lodging necessary to create a sense of place would not occur.



Large surface parking lots face the pedestrian way in the current condition.



Existing retail establishments do not contribute to the streetscape.



Sidewalks in the district are inconsistent.



Large surface parking lots represent opportunity for placemaking.



Old Mammoth Road public view to the Sherwin Mountains should be maintained.



Public views along east-west streets should also be maintained.

## B. Alternative Development Pattern

If the goals of the district include creating a walkable “center” that serves year-round and seasonal residents as well as visitors, North Old Mammoth Road must look at a different development pattern than currently exists. Rather than a more suburban pattern that promotes large surface parking lots at the street with retail/commercial clusters in small malls, a walkable town center would refer to a more traditional urban town, with a “Main Street” character. This is defined as a walkable street, lined with retail establishments, with parking hidden either underground or in the lot’s core. Pedestrian amenities are comprehensive. Assuming that new development would follow these goals, one could expect to have individual parcel developments that have the following characteristics:

- Commercial and retail is found on the ground floor facing Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road.
- Residential, lodging, service, and office uses are above.
- Residential development faces Laurel Mountain Road and Sierra Park Road to integrate with existing condominium developments.
- Buildings are built to the property line along Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road, and mid-block connectors with minimal setbacks of up to five feet.
- Residential uses at ground level observe a limited setback, used for front yard or stoop. In no case is front yard parking allowed.
- Buildings step back so that height is located at the core of the block and the street façade is at a pedestrian scale.
- Massing is carefully sited so as to not cast shadows on the street sidewalk during the winter midday.
- New mid-block connector streets and pedestrian ways to reduce the block sizes to more walkable dimensions (300 to 400 feet maximum). Garage or parking accesses are encouraged from these mid-block connectors.
- Parking is underground or within structure.
- On-street public parking is provided in commercial areas where feasible and along mid-block connector streets.
- Curb cuts are minimal and do not interrupt the pedestrian flow.

This alternative development pattern follows the principles of the newly-adopted General Plan and addresses district goals of revitalization while allowing existing residential and lodging uses within the district to remain compatible with new development.



## 6. DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The approximately 48-acre North Old Mammoth Road District is the likely location for much of the future development activity within the Town. It is centrally located; has the necessary infrastructure; has available transit; is zoned for commercial uses, which allows mixed use; is already developed (not raw land) and; therefore, is considered as the appropriate location for new density. The District should remain as a mixed-use district, similar to a small town center, with residential and lodging to support retail, commercial and supporting businesses. The adopted 2007 General Plan specifically states that the District follow the traditional small scale mixed use “main street” development pattern to this end.

Within the 48-acre District, some of existing uses are expected to remain permanently. Other uses may remain over time but also have the potential to change and therefore are considered in the development program. This development program represents a maximum and is subject to environmental review on a project by project basis.

**Existing Uses Assumed to Remain:** A portion of this district has already developed with residential condominiums. It is envisioned that these units will remain for the foreseeable future and not experience any change. This includes a portion of Block 2A, including Krystal Villa West and other condominium developments; the portion of Block 2 with Krystal Villa East; the portions of Block 4 with Sierra Manor, and a portion of Block 5, also with condominium developments, for a total of approximately 12.1 acres or 25% of the District’s area. Please see Appendix 3 for illustration of assumed lands to remain and assumed to have the potential to change.

Likewise, existing roads are assumed to remain, which constitutes approximately 8.75 acres or 20% of the District’s area.

Therefore, a maximum of 55% of the District’s area could be expected to undergo change in the foreseeable future.

**Commercial Uses:** The market analysis prepared by Economics Research Associates (ERA 2007) suggests that 270,000 square feet of retail could be supported over the next 15 years. Assuming that this would all occur on ground floor development, this commercial development could line Tavern Road between Laurel Mountain and Sierra Park along both sides of the street; Old Mammoth Road between Main Street and Tavern Road, also on both sides of the street; and Old Mammoth Road to Sierra Nevada Road, on the west side of the street only (east side is location of existing condominiums). Figure 6 from the ERA study illustrates this development pattern.

**Residential/Lodging Uses:** Residential/Lodging Uses: New residential and lodging uses could be assumed to be on the floors above the ground-floor retail, and on-grade along Laurel Mountain Road. Applying the current allowable density (40 du/acre) to the acreage in the District that could potentially develop would result in approximately 1,107,000 square feet of residential use. Applying the currently allowable density with community amenities and requiring discretionary approval (80 du/acre), the District could potentially develop with approximately 2,213,000 square feet of residential use. Please note, these numbers are not a projection; market conditions, decision to build, program, environmental analysis etc. will dictate the ultimate program. This calculation just tests the currently allowed density over the areas projected to change.

**Parking:** Commercial uses planned for the district would require between 190,000 and 235,000 square feet for 540 and 670 stalls. Residential uses would require between 387,500 to 775,000 square feet for 1,100 to 2,200 stalls (assumes approximately 350 sf/stall).

**Public and Community Space:** Outdoor public areas as well as indoor gathering spaces will be very important to bringing vitality, energy, and civic activity to the district. A minimum of two outdoor public spaces should be considered as contributors to the “placemaking” and activity generators in the District.

One public space should be located on the northeast corner of Tavern Road and Old Mammoth Road where it will receive the maximum amount of sunlight (southwest exposure). This public space could be surrounded by retail, grocery, or restaurant uses to encourage outdoor activities related to the land use. It is envisioned to be between 4,500 and 6,500 square feet. A second public space should be located at the southeast corner of the Clearwater site, at the northwest corner of Old Mammoth Road and Sierra Nevada Road. An existing stand of large, mature trees should be preserved and incorporated into this publicly accessible open space. This site is envisioned to also be between 4,500 and 6,500 square feet. Additional indoor space for civic, cultural, or meeting room uses (public space) should be provided. This may include access to conference facility space for public meetings and events.

The streetscape is also considered community space and should be designed as such. Wide sidewalks along Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road should support pedestrian mobility, transit stops, snow storage, and pedestrian-oriented street furniture, such as trash, ash urns, benches, signage, and transit shelters. A minimum of 15 foot wide pedestrian sidewalks should be along Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road (north side of street) and a minimum of 10 foot wide sidewalks should be considered along Tavern Road, along the south side of block. Wider sidewalks are provided where there is more solar access to encourage outside gathering and dining.





North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 7: Pedestrian Oriented Uses

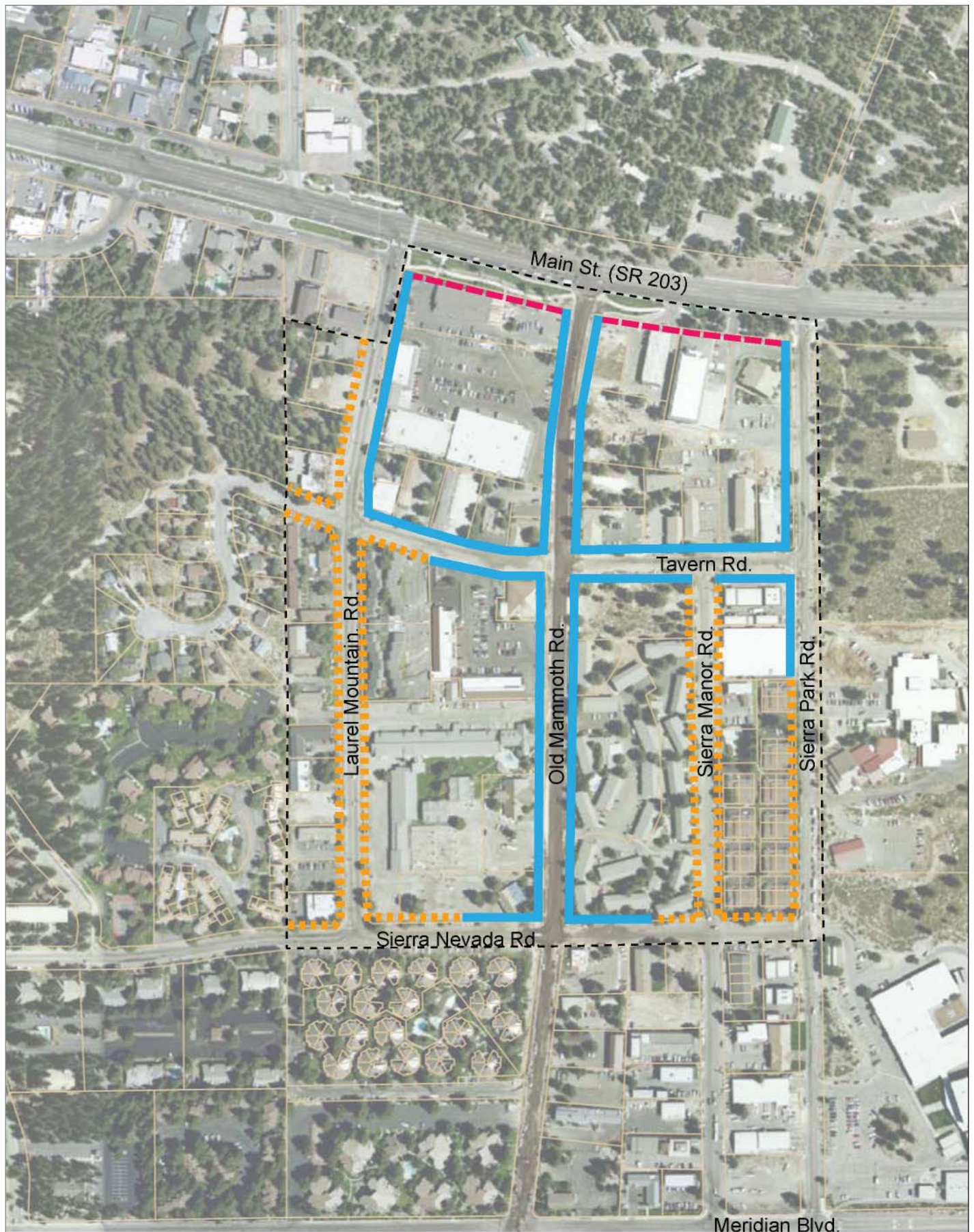


## 7. DISTRICT PLANNING GUIDELINES

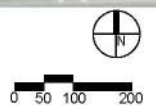
In addition to the design guidelines used by the Town, the following specific guidelines also apply to the North Old Mammoth Road District.

### Land Use & Placemaking:

1. Promote a mixed use district, with retail on the ground floor that is oriented to the street and pedestrian corridors in a traditional “Main Street” pattern.
2. Commercial uses that cater to the pedestrian, such as retail shops and restaurants should comprise no less than 75% of the ground floor uses along the following streets (See Figure 7, shown in red solid lines):
  - o Old Mammoth Road from Main Street to Tavern Road, both sides
  - o Tavern Road from Laurel Mountain Road to Sierra Park Road, both sides, on the ground floor facing Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road.
3. Commercial uses should comprise no less than 50% of the ground floor uses along the following streets (See Figure 7, shown in blue dashed lines):
  - o Old Mammoth Road from Tavern Road south to Sierra Nevada Road, west side only.
4. Residential, lodging, or support uses should be developed over the commercial uses listed above as the first priority.
5. Lodging shall have conference facilities to support year round use.
6. Office or support uses could also be above the ground floor uses within the district, especially along Sierra Park Road opposite the future Civic Center site.
7. South of Tavern Road, residential development should face Laurel Mountain Road and Sierra Park Road to integrate with existing condominium developments.
8. Provide adequate public open spaces to support the community activities.
9. Architectural and landscape architectural design should follow the adopted Town Design Guidelines.



- Type 1: Non Residential - max. setback 5'-0" build to sidewalk
- - - - - Type 2: Residential - min. setback 10'-0", No front yard parking
- - - - - Type 3: Main street - Special design



North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 8: Street Setback, Build To Line



### Massing Guidelines:

10. Residential uses at ground level observe a limited setback of ten feet, used for front yard or stoop. In no case is front yard parking allowed. Front doors are encouraged to be on the street to promote pedestrian activity and interaction.
11. Commercial buildings shall be built to the property line along Old Mammoth Road and Tavern Road, with minimal setbacks of five feet to accommodate entry courts, offset planes, etc. (See Figure 8)
12. Massing is carefully sited so as to not cast shadows on the street sidewalk during the winter midday. A shade/shadow study must be prepared for each development proposal, showing the extent of shade at 10:00 am and 2:00 p.m. for the spring and fall equinox and for the winter solstice to determine percent of shade in the public realm. The goal is to provide 100% sun in this area.
13. Building height is limited to 35 feet, as it is today. Additional height should be a discretionary item. The 2007 General Plan policy allows for a density increase for amenities that specifically enhance the tourism, community, and environmental objectives of the Town.
14. Building heights shall step back from the public realm, at a maximum angle of 45 degrees above 35 feet. This is to encourage additional solar access to the public realm. (See Figure 9).
15. Buildings massing shall also step back so that if additional height is granted, it is located at the core of the block with the street façade remaining at a pedestrian (no greater than 35 feet) scale. (See Figure 10).
16. The maximum site coverage shall be 70%.
17. The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) shall be 2.5. (See Figure 11).

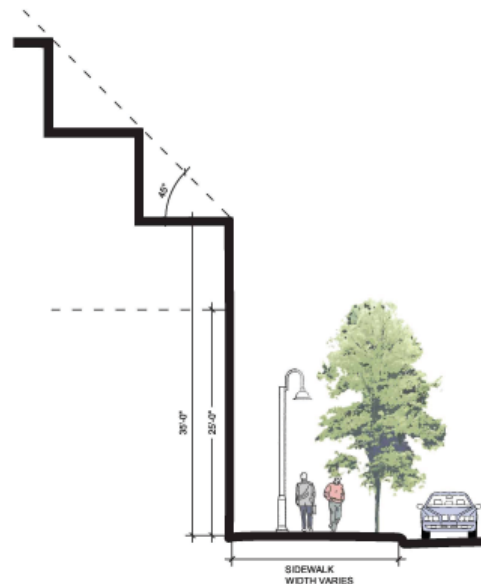





Figure 9: Step - back





**Building Heights**

-  25' - 35'
-  Up to 45', With discretionary review
-  Up to 65', With discretionary review

North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 10: Building Heights



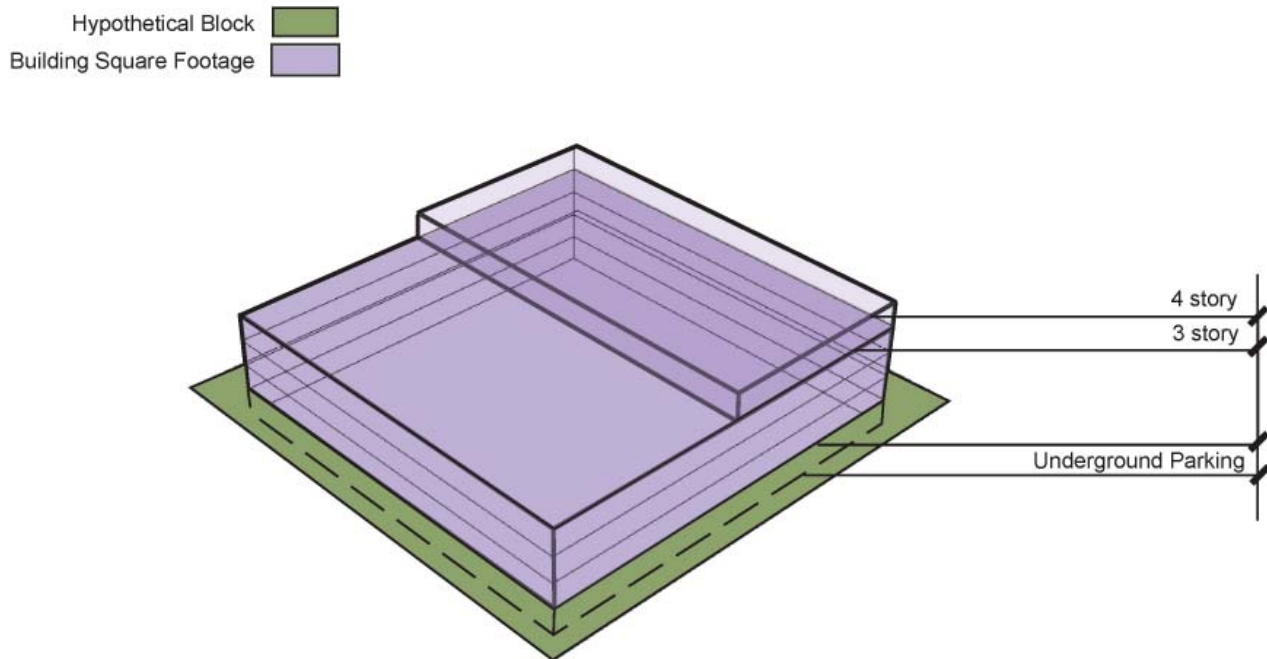


Figure 11: 2.5 FAR (Floor Area Ratio)

FAR is the calculation of Floor Area Ratio, or the ratio of site area to floor area. FAR is the gross floor area of all buildings permitted on a lot divided by the area of the lot. In zoning, the permitted building floor area is calculated by multiplying the maximum FAR specified for the zoning district by the total area of the parcel.

A permitted FAR of 2.5 would allow the construction of 100,000 square feet of floor space on 40,000 square feet of land ( $40,000 \times 2.5 = 100,000$ ).



North Old Mammoth Road District  
Figure 12: Sidewalk Width Concept



### Mobility Guidelines:

18. Promote a walkable environment which encourages “feet first” as the primary transportation mode, accommodates bicycles, and allows for parking “reservoirs”.
19. Provide adequate street right-of-way dimensions to move traffic in a reasonable manner; provide on-street parking where feasible and promote a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.
20. Sidewalks shall be required to be built in all new development. Sidewalks should be continuous throughout the district and sized as per Figure 12.
21. Provide mid-block connections to create a finer grain of walkable streets.
22. New mid-block connector streets shall be provided in the following locations to reduce the block sizes to more walkable dimensions (300 to 400 feet maximum):
  - o Block 1, a north/south connection and an east/west connection, approximately midway on the block. The north/south connection shall not create an intersection with Main Street, but shall be a pedestrian connection to Main Street.
  - o Block 2, one north/south connection and two east/west connections, approximately dividing the blocks into equal segments. One east/west connection could be a pedestrian connection.
  - o Block 3, a north/south connection and an east/west connection, approximately midway on the block. The north/south connection shall not create an intersection with Main Street, but shall include a pedestrian connection to Main Street.
23. All mid-block connectors shall have full pedestrian sidewalks on each side if vehicular, or be designed as a “24-7” publicly accessible pedestrian way, if it is excluding vehicles (See Figure 13).
24. Garage or parking accesses are to be accessed from these mid-block connectors.
25. Parking reservoirs shall be underground or within structure, unless the lot size dictates otherwise.
26. On street public parking shall be provided in commercial areas and along mid-block connector streets where feasible. Tavern Road is encouraged to have on-street public parking on both sides of the street.
27. Curb cuts should be located on mid-block connectors; garage entrances should be minimal and shall not interrupt the pedestrian flow. All garage and egress/ingress access points must meet the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District standards.
28. Bicycle routes shall be determined by a Town-wide bicycle master plan. Bicycle parking shall be provided in a publicly accessible area on each block and at all public open spaces. Amenities for cyclists, such as showers and locker rooms are also encouraged.

29. Transit shall be encouraged and accommodated with necessary pull-outs, shelters, and signage.

#### Sustainability Guidelines:

30. To promote environmental responsiveness, sustainability measures should be demonstrated on all development projects. At the current time, the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings<sup>6</sup>.

6 [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

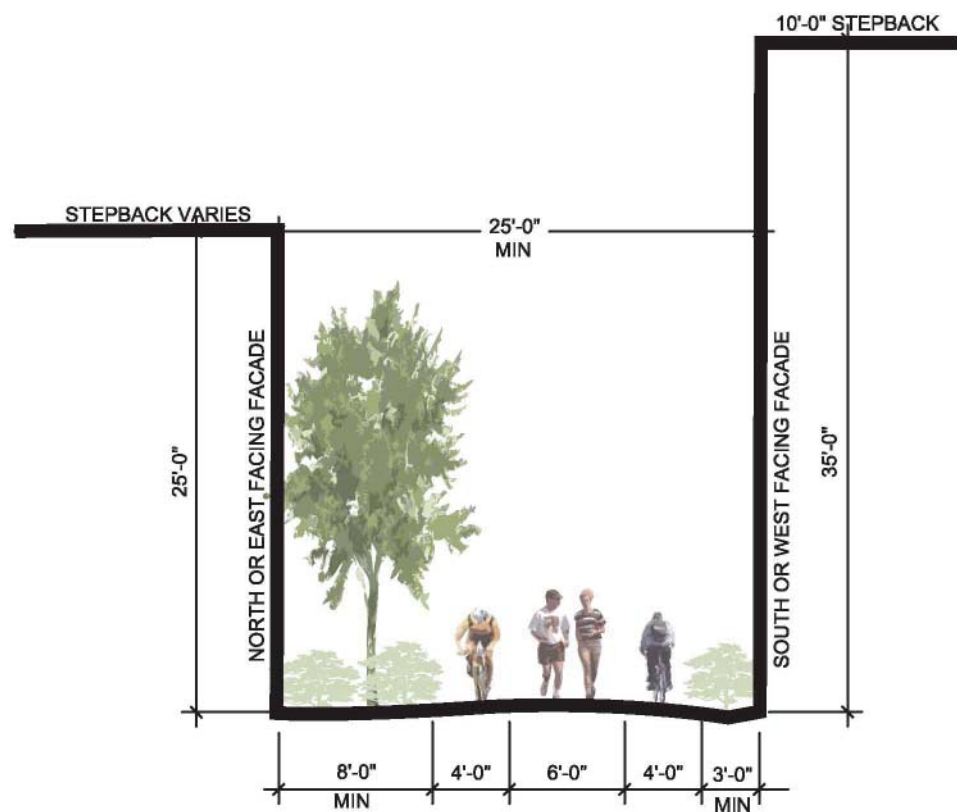


Figure 13: Typical Section, Mid-Block Connector (Pedestrian Way)

## 8. CONCLUSION

The North Old Mammoth Road District represents a future development opportunity for the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and the opportunity to plan a community that reflects the values expressed in the General Plan. This District can support the critical mix of land uses and the necessary critical mass that will make a recognized district and a pedestrian oriented community. The District, through its sensitive design, massing, and scale can truly create a “sense of place” that can be shared by residents and visitors alike.

This District Planning Study expresses the necessary tools for project review to meet these objectives.



The North Old Mammoth Road District offers a location for the Town to realize its General Plan goals and serve its local residents and visitors with a pedestrian friendly mixed-use environment.



**Prepared for:**

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**August 21, 2007**

## 9. APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – 2007 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

April 25, 2007    Planning Commission Workshop Minutes Attached  
July 23, 2007    Neighborhood Cafe Meeting Notes Attached  
August 29, 2007   Draft Planning Commission Workshop Minutes Attached

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION  
Clearwater Neighborhood Workshop  
Wednesday, April 25, 2007 – 6:00 p.m.  
Council Chambers, Suite Z  
Minaret Village Shopping Center

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The workshop was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Jo Bacon, Tony Barrett, Rhonda Duggan, Vice Chair Elizabeth Tenney and Chair Roy Saari. Also present were Mark Wardlaw, Community Development Director; Bill Taylor, Deputy Community Development Director; Pam Kobylarz, Assistant Planner; Steve Speidel, Principal Planner; and Karen Ridley, Administrative Coordinator.

Chair Saari announced the passing of Senior Planner Craig Olson to the public and he asked for a minute of silence in memory of Craig.

III. WORKSHOP

1. District Zoning Amendment 06-03, Clearwater. To receive public comment on the project objectives and concept in the context of the overall objectives for Old Mammoth Road and the site and its surroundings. These comments will be incorporated into the staff review of the application.

Director Wardlaw said that the purpose of the meeting is how current development projects fit within the General Planning process; the Town Council recently adopted nine bullet points that will be used to form policy resolutions to guide the evaluation of these projects; the projects will be evaluated in the context of a logical, rational planning district using CEQA and market studies; there will be a series of neighborhood workshops to discuss the character of the district and identify issues, opportunities, and constraints; a staff evaluation will be conducted using the public input from the workshop.



Director Wardlaw presented the PowerPoint presentation of the Clearwater Specific Plan; the project is 339 units with 480 rooms; 6 buildings including affordable housing; the height ranges from 21' to 105'; 92% lot coverage with parking structure; 52% lot coverage above ground.

Tom Landau, architect for the project, provided a project description; there are sixteen prominent trees on the site; the applicant is interested in preserving trees; he acknowledged that there are connectivity issues; one of the six buildings is designated for workforce housing; there is a walking path through the six buildings; the North entrance is on Old Mammoth Road; there is also an entrance from Laurel Mountain Road; there are clearly defined store fronts; they tried to maintain the view sheds; the use of different materials gives the impression that the project was built over time, not all at once; as a benefit, they will enhance the public bus stop; a variety of materials will be used on this project, i.e. – natural woods, stones, and metals; shadow studies are to be done for the EIR at 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3:00 p.m., and 6:00 p.m. for the months of December, March, June, and September; the objective the shadow studies is to show that there is no adverse impact to the surrounding properties; 18–19 feet is the average height of their buildings on Old Mammoth Road; pedestrian friendly façade.

Les Card, LSA Associates, presented the traffic analysis; their technical analysis is still in process; isolated a study area of six intersections along Old Mammoth Road, Main Street, and Meridian; two impacted locations - Old Mammoth Road/Sierra Nevada and Meridian/Azimuth; these impacted locations are already deficient under the existing conditions and criteria used for thresholds of impact; this project adds traffic to these locations. He said that the parking plan was reviewed; the components of the plan – retail, restaurants, and residential; the project has 740 parking spaces required; plan to provide for a full access shuttle for the residential component.

Mark Carney, attorney for the project, said that resource documents were identified by Town Council on March 20, 2007; those documents should be used as a benchmark for every project; the Town Council said that you should be guided by the Vision statement, progress draft General Plan Update, Physical Development and Mobility Plan, the community benefits discussion during a Town Council meeting, MLTPA trail inventory, UCSB study, EIR analysis, the Community Stakeholder Group's 10 points, Peer Resort report, and the draft term sheets.

Mr. Carney spoke of the priorities in the resource documents: 1) protect the surrounding national environment by limiting the urbanized area and maintaining the urban growth boundary; 2) revitalize Old Mammoth Road; 3) transform Old Mammoth Road into a walking/shopping corridor; 4) encourage transit-oriented development that prioritizes feet first; 5) provide for adequate workforce/affordable housing; 6) address the Town shortage of retail space; 7) promote exceptional standards for design and development; 8) provide resort and conference meeting facilities; 9) protect and enhance open space; 10) develop and promote a system of comprehensive trails and public access; 11) create an attractive environment filled with the arts; 12) improve connectivity and circulation for cyclists and pedestrians; 13) create commercial corridors along Old Mammoth Road; 14) provide a child care facility within the affordable housing units; 15) accessibility to the mountain on a snowy day.

Chair Saari opened the public hearing.

Carolyn Caputo, resides in the Knolls, wants to see discretion used to develop this project; does not want the Town to give up our community to a developer; do not need more cold beds; we need to develop and create an environment that reflects where we live; the Town needs to say "No" to this project.

Tom Moody, representing the Sierra Park Villas Homeowners Association, asked the Commission to weigh the value to the community of the underground parking and the resulting density bonus that impacts traffic, water resources, aesthetics, height, and pedestrian access; there is a 4-year construction period for this project; he questioned why the applicant could not creatively design a project with a height of 35-45 feet and that is more consistent with the existing zoning and densities; he suggested that staff work with the applicant to give the project a more mountain favor with treated wood and rock; he thinks that the project looks too modernistic; the landscape plan should enhance Old Mammoth Road; he asked if the shuttle system to mitigate traffic will be on-going or temporary.

John Wentworth, representing MLTPA, said to consider the context of planning areas/districts and other projects; maximize the visitor experience.

Dan Dawson, local, said that he thinks that this is a keen project that meets a variety of objectives, i.e. – revitalization of Old Mammoth Road; he likes the "mountain, urban, modern" architectural style; however, there are too many units; eliminate the density bonus for underground parking; cut the density, they do not need the height; 107

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feet at the peak is excessive height; he likes the footprint of the project; does not want the Town to be held hostage by developers; the Town should have high standards and demand the projects that people want to see.

Pat Eckert, local, said that this project does not confirm to the Vision statement of small town feel, trees, and views; her plea is for the Commission to realize that people live, work, and go to school in this area; she is opposed to the project; the project looks urban.

Dave Taylor, representing the Timberline Homeowners Association, said that one map indicates that the access with the least traffic conflict is on Laurel Mountain Road at the top of a "pinnacle" where there is a blind hill – not a good location; he is worried about shops and beds being filled; he is concerned with the 4-year time frame to built this project; a more eco-friendly design should be considered.

Vice Chair Tenney received comments via email. She summarized the comments from Sandy Hogan: she would like this project to be like a European village; she wants the project to have residential-oriented retail services on Laurel Mountain Road. Vice Chair Tenney asked the public for their thoughts on Ms. Hogan's comments.

Tim Didriksen, local, said that he is not against the project; in his opinion, the developers have tried to meet all of the requirements; he questioned how much retail space is going to be actually filled since other businesses have closed.

Stan Heller, local, said that there are disconnected shopping centers on Old Mammoth Road; create high density, mixed use space; Old Mammoth Road should be commercial, mixed, and residential; he thinks that the project is attractive; his concern is that if the Town will not allow this project to be completed, then the Town will end up with more 1970s type of strip malls.

Jan Wing, second homeowner and architect, said that she lives across the street from the proposed project; she does not want to look at a 6-story building; traffic will be impacted; she would like something on a smaller scale.

Ian Roman, 25-year resident, said that the project is too tall and too dense; there will be snow removal problems; he is concerned about shadows created by the tall buildings.

Peyo Michaels, local, lives in Sierra Park Villas in Unit #24. He said that the project does give a good streetscape to Old Mammoth Road;



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the project will block the view of the mountain; he objects to the density; the density is creating the cars and the height.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

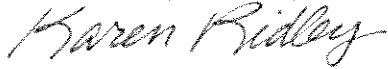
The workshop ended at 7:55 p.m. and adjourned to the special adjourned meeting of May 15, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Wardlaw

Community Development Director



Karen Ridley  
Administrative Coordinator

**Old Mammoth Road Neighborhood Café**  
**July 23, 2007**  
**The Sherwins**

Key Points/Concepts

- Maybe the Rite-Aid area is part of another area (Main Street); same for Chateau Road area.
- Retail: need to diversify, include stores that serve locals as well as visitors, e.g. Mountain Sports and Hardware in Truckee.
- It wants to be a walking street—snow removal is key.
- Locals MUST use the area. There are 17 restaurants within walking distance, yet we don't yet capture and hold visitors in the district. Build up visitor usage.
- Locals' village concept. Need "Disneyland" style map to show themes/business locations. Restaurant row = foot traffic.
- How do we take traffic pressure off OMR? Need more foot paths/walkways along the intersecting and parallel streets.
- It's the only true example of mixed use (commercial, retail, lodging, residences). Could be enhanced with pocket parks, trails, parks and paths to connect entire neighborhood.
- 17 restaurants, mixed-use, spread out—ability to walk along OMR needs to take seasonal requirements into account (snow removal, de-icing, snow shedding).
- New buildings should reflect good design standards.
- Potential pocket park at the old Grumpy's location.
- The OMR area has the most potential to be the "town center"; however, it's a hodgepodge without a central theme or park, and a "strip" design.
- It should continue to be a good place to live for those who choose to live within walking distance of its amenities.

- Centralized underground parking is needed to make the area more walkable/attractive for visitors.
- Build up transportation services/amenities.
- Desire to see buildings no higher than three stories.
- Potential “European Design,” with businesses on first floor, offices on second/third floors, residential above.
- Concern regarding putting buildings right along the sidewalk—need for snow and ice control.
- It’s the “Everything District.” Needs sprucing up with banners and working crosswalk lights.
- There are now two main entrances to town—one at Main and OMR, one at Meridian and OMR; sense of arrival lacking.
- Art and Culture District—events in Mammoth Creek Park, encourage themed cluster of theater, entertainment, galleries, loft space, etc.
- More attention to ADA to make all businesses accessible to those in wheelchairs or mobility challenges.
- Individual condominium ownership of business space, to counter effects of higher rents forcing local businesses out of businesses.
- Desire for greater communication among businesses in district; potential for weekly communication about what’s going on in the district (e-mail blast, fax, etc.)
- Design and Architecture—retain mountain flavor, begin to shift surface parking to rear of businesses.
- It’s part of a cohesive town; consider in specific context of surrounding district/neighborhoods.
- Very important to retain view corridors to Sherwins, Knolls.
- Local-oriented retail—best location for it is in North Old Mammoth Road district.
- Von’s is a single-point destination for Town; there should be a diversity of choices for grocery shopping.



- Path to schools will be affected by Clearwater development; new paths should utilize Meridian more, need better, and better maintained, sidewalks on Meridian.
- It's the heart of Mammoth.
- Use more roundabouts for traffic calming
- Need for a transportation hub in the area, connected to public parking facilities?
- Use transportation to connect high density nodes.

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION

**Special Meeting**

Wednesday, August 29, 2007 - 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Suite Z  
Minaret Village Shopping Center

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Tony Barrett, Rhonda Duggan, and Chair Roy Saari. Commissioner Jo Bacon and Vice Chair Elizabeth Tenney were absent. Also present were Mark Wardlaw, Community Development Director; Pam Kobylarz, Assistant Planner; Steve Speidel, Principal Planner; and Karen Ridley, Administrative Coordinator.

III. WORKSHOP ON THE CLEARWATER / NORTH OLD MAMMOTH ROAD DISTRICT PLAN (Presentation, no materials).

Director Wardlaw said that the objective of tonight's meeting is to hear comments from the public; the focus will be on building heights, streetscape standards, the width of the public rights of way, the overall circulation system, and some of the elements of programming.

Kathy Garcia of Wallace Roberts and Todd Inc. gave a PowerPoint presentation.

Director Wardlaw confirmed for Commissioner Barrett that other districts are being taken into consideration when defining this district; Director Wardlaw said that trails, sidewalks, bike paths, and streets of various classifications must be interwoven into this area.

At 6:38 p.m., the public hearing was opened.

Marshall Minobe, local, commented that it sounds as though the Town is entertaining the idea of a General Plan amendment after just completing the General Plan Update; he feels that an amendment would be a disservice to the community; he does not feel that it is in the best interest

of the community to use the baseline plan for Clearwater to drive the district plan.

Tom Cage, local, said that in long range planning, it makes sense to include the other side of Main Street in this district plan – even though it is Forest Service land; he spoke of a parking authority district with potential parking areas in the Shady Rest tract and in the North Old Mammoth District; he hopes that land owners and business owners will participate in the parking authority; he said that whatever is decided for this district must fit in with neighboring district plans; he spoke of the districts agreeing on a design overlay in order to have consistency and continuity; he is not advocating cookie cutter, but he would like to see an architectural and transportation flow.

Tony Colasardo, owner of Footloose Sports, said that the gateway to Mammoth is not just Old Mammoth Road; he said that there should be seamless boundaries within the plan and throughout the districts; he suggested being aware of what is outside of a district as well as what complements the district; he would like the Commission to allow the District to move forward.

Ted Carleton, editor of The Sheet, asked for a definition of floor area ratio; he said that Old Mammoth Road had been narrowed and now it sounds as though the road is going to be widened; he asked about the parameters of the widening; he asked how bike paths would be worked into a curb side or on street parking scenario.

Ms. Garcia provided a hypothetical example to explain floor area ratio; she said that the widening of the road is one alternative, i.e. – each side would be 10 feet additional to the right of way allowing for 8 feet parking and wider sidewalks; she said that they could make adjustments to include bike paths.

Chair Saari asked Ms. Garcia about bus pull-outs.

Ms. Garcia spoke of extending the pull-outs to support curb side parking as well as bus drop offs; short-term parking to support retail; flexibility with snow removal.

Drew Hild, local, commented that most people in California use floor area ratio to help control how it will look on the outside, not on the inside; he thinks that Ms. Garcia's use of floor area ratio is a good idea; he suggested having a discussion about the flavor and the activities that people want to see in this district; he suggested looking at models from other cities to see how they addressed similar issues; if the Town wants to



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promote a feet first community, then the Town must consider parking; this is a perfect spot for a local's village.

Pat Eckert, local, agrees with Mr. Cage's comments; she feels that the Old Mammoth Road District should be community first, not resort first; she thinks that the boundary should have been shortened to the current commercial development; she suggested thinking of the community first when considering development and design; she pointed out that every need of the community is on or adjacent to Old Mammoth Road; she commented that parking on Laurel Mountain Road would compound problems from the Clearwater development; she is concerned with ice and the slope of the road.

John Wentworth, local, commented that there was no mention of bicycles in this plan; outdoor recreation must be considered; mobility and transportation should be looked at as a whole, not district by district; he is disheartened that the area north of Highway 203 was not given more consideration.

Bruce Woodward, architect, commented that floor area ratio is widely used, but does not address PAOT; he referred to the slide containing the Overarching Principals – Mountain Town Character; he commented that solar access is not mountain town character – everyone wants it; the feel of the Town was not addressed; snow and wind issues were not addressed; when speaking of neighboring districts, nothing to the south of this area was mentioned and it is a big part of the Town core.

Matthew Lehman, local, glad to see the effort to change the look and feel of Mammoth; he thinks that the connectivity with Main Street will happen in time.

Phil Presser, local, referred to the slide with the proposed height step backs; he spoke of the walk through corridors; he inquired about pedestrian access and asked if there would be tunnels through the buildings; he asked how parking is going to impact snow removal; he is disappointed that Clearwater will set the tone for the rest of the district and that everyone else will need to fit in with Clearwater; he distributed a handout with his comments to the Planning Commission.

John Vereuck, property owner, believes that Old Mammoth Road is the hub of the community; he said that the entrance of town is the stoplight; we have no control over the right side of Main Street; districting has to be done first, but it is not run by any project, i.e. – Clearwater; he hopes to see connectivity in the district.

Ms. Garcia said that due to time constraints, she did not talk about the sphere of influence; however, the sphere of influence has been taken into consideration; she mentioned that Principal Planner Steve Speidel is working with her firm on a bicycle and trails plan; the concerns made by the public tonight on the character, look, and feel will be considered.

#### IV. ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting ended at 7:28 p.m. and adjourned to the regular meeting of September 12, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Wardlaw  
Community Development Director

Karen Ridley  
Administrative Coordinator





## Appendix 2 – 2007 TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES GENERAL PLAN

### GENERAL PLAN GOALS

#### ECONOMY

- E.1. Be a world-renowned destination community in order to achieve a sustainable year-round economy.
- E.2. Achieve sustainable tourism by building on the area's natural beauty, recreational, cultural, and historic assets.
- E.3. Achieve a more diversified economy and employment base consistent with community character.

#### ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND NATURAL HISTORY

- A.1. Be a vibrant cultural center by weaving arts and local heritage and the area's unique natural history into everyday life.
- A.2. Encourage public art and cultural expression throughout the community.

#### COMMUNITY DESIGN

- C.1. Improve and enhance the community's unique character by requiring a high standard of design in all development in Mammoth Lakes.
- C.2. Design the man-made environment to complement, not dominate, the natural environment.
- C.3. Ensure safe and attractive public spaces, including sidewalks, trails, parks and streets.
- C.4. Be stewards of natural and scenic resources essential to community image and character.
- C.5. Eliminate glare to improve public safety. Minimize light pollution to preserve views of stars and the night sky.
- C.6. Enhance community character by minimizing noise.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD AND DISTRICT CHARACTER

This element expands on Land Use and Community Design goals.

#### LAND USE

- 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.

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

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

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

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

L.6. Establish an Urban Growth Boundary to maintain a compact urban form; protect natural and outdoor recreational resources; prevent sprawl.

## MOBILITY

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.

M.8. Enhance small town community character through the design of the transportation system.

M.9. Improve snow and ice management.

## PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION

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

P.2. Provide additional parks within town.

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

P.4. Provide and encourage a wide variety of outdoor and indoor recreation readily accessible to

residents and visitors of all ages.

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

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

R.1. Be stewards of habitat, wildlife, fisheries, forests and vegetation resources of significant biological, ecological, aesthetic and recreational value.

R.2. Maintain a healthy regional natural ecosystem and provide stewardship for wetlands, wet meadows and riparian areas from development-related impacts.

R.3. Preserve and enhance the exceptional natural, scenic and recreational value of Mammoth Creek.

R.4. Conserve and enhance the quality and quantity of Mammoth Lakes' water resources.

R.5. Minimize erosion and sedimentation.

R.6. Optimize efficient use of energy.

R.7. Be a leader in use of green building technology.

R.8. Increase use of renewable energy resources and encourage conservation of existing sources of energy.

R.9. Reduce volume of solid waste.

R.10. Protect health of community residents by assuring that the town of Mammoth Lakes remains in compliance with or improves compliance with air quality standards.

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

S.1. Support high quality health care and child care for Mammoth Lakes' residents and visitors.

S.2. Keep Mammoth Lakes a safe place to live, work and play.

S.3. Minimize loss of life, injury, property damage, and natural resource destruction from all public safety hazards.

S.4. Maintain adequate emergency response capabilities.

S.5. Support high quality educational services and life-long learning resources within the community.

S.6. Enhance quality of life by encouraging and supporting high quality facilities and services.

## Community Character

Protection of the character and quality of life of stable residential neighborhoods is paramount. This section summarizes the desired characteristics and roles of the five distinct districts and four mountain portals where the greatest amount of change is expected to occur. These districts and mountain portals are:

1. Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest
2. Gateway
3. North Village
4. Sierra Star
5. Snowcreek
6. Eagle Lodge / Mountain Portal
7. Canyon Lodge / Mountain Portal
8. Main Lodge / Mountain Portal
9. Village / Mountain Portal

For the successful and sustainable development of the community, each district should provide different recreation and leisure opportunities, uses, facilities and activities. Each district should add to and complement the community's overall resort offerings and be programmed to serve the community as well as increase midweek and shoulder season visitation. Program opportunities include but are not limited to:

- Convention and conference facilities
- Performance and cinema theaters
- Anchor retail and entertainment uses
- An indoor four seasons field house, skating rink, and swimming facility
- Expanded golf and tennis facilities
- In-town state-of-the-art Nordic Ski center facility
- Improved equestrian facilities
- Open space
- Plazas and special events areas
- Arts, culture and heritage facilities
- Public parking facilities
- Market rate workforce housing
- Child and infant care facilities

## Districts

### 1. Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest

The Main Street, Old Mammoth Road, and Shady Rest areas should invite pedestrian activity and provide gathering places and opportunities for interaction in a vibrant mix of retail, commercial, and workforce housing. Development should be attractive with a high level of detail and active storefront uses resulting in a pleasing pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Commercial corridors should be walkable year-round, vibrant, colorful, and accessible. Uses should be mixed to allow offices, residential housing and

visitor accommodations above ground floor retail.

Buildings should have distinctive mountain architecture and varied roof forms with accentuating physical landmarks at intersections, street corners and other appropriate locations. The streetscape should be safe and designed for the pedestrian with the inclusion of street furniture, trees, flowers and planters, interesting sidewalk surfaces and public art.

New development should improve connectivity and circulation with bike and pedestrian paths, sidewalks and roads.

### General characteristics:

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

### Main Street characteristics:

1. Grand boulevard, most significant entry and exit for the town
2. Primary intersections (Old Mammoth Road, Manzanita Road, Minaret Road) create visual book-ends to neighborhoods
3. Multiple safe pedestrian crossings from north to south side of Main Street
4. Landscaping and commercial mixed use development located so as to frame and enclose the boulevard



5.	Incorporate Murphy Gulch as a natural landscape amenity.	3.	A community-oriented design:
6.	Reduction or elimination of frontage roads	a.	Neighborhood context and connections:
7.	Long major street divided into distinct and unique areas:	(1)	Pedestrian and auto connections to adjoining areas and neighborhoods (e.g. Sierra Valley District, Tavern Road, Main Street and Center Street)
	a.	(2)	Traffic calming and management with adjoining neighborhoods
		(3)	Trail and pedestrian emphasis
		(4)	Transit accessible
		b.	Integrated site planning and architectural design:
		(1)	Accessible wetlands and community park(s) connected to the community
		(2)	Significant tree preservation
		(3)	Unobtrusive, articulated buildings
		(4)	Minimum paving, maximum permeable surface
		(5)	High quality materials
		(6)	Parking
		(7)	Energy efficient design
		(8)	Innovative snow management
		4.	A future catalyst to surrounding commercial areas
		5.	Developed in phases:
		a.	High quality of living throughout (no disparity, grouping or phasing by income)
		b.	Reasonable product absorption rate
		6.	Long-term affordability:
		a.	Durability of materials and design
		b.	Designed for low operating and maintenance costs and energy efficiency
		c.	Transit accessibility
		7.	Provision of key resident amenities such as:
		a.	Child care
		b.	Active and passive recreation

## 2. Gateway

Located south of State Route 203, east of Old Mammoth Road, the Gateway District should be an attractive and iconic corridor in to and out of town, and should communicate Mammoth Lakes' character. It includes schools, hospital, industrial park, library, parks, trails, open space and the future Civic Center site. The District should provide a safe pedestrian environment, and emphasize linkages between all elements in the Gateway District and the community's residential neighborhoods. Significant public views should be preserved through high-level design standards.

### Old Mammoth Road characteristics:

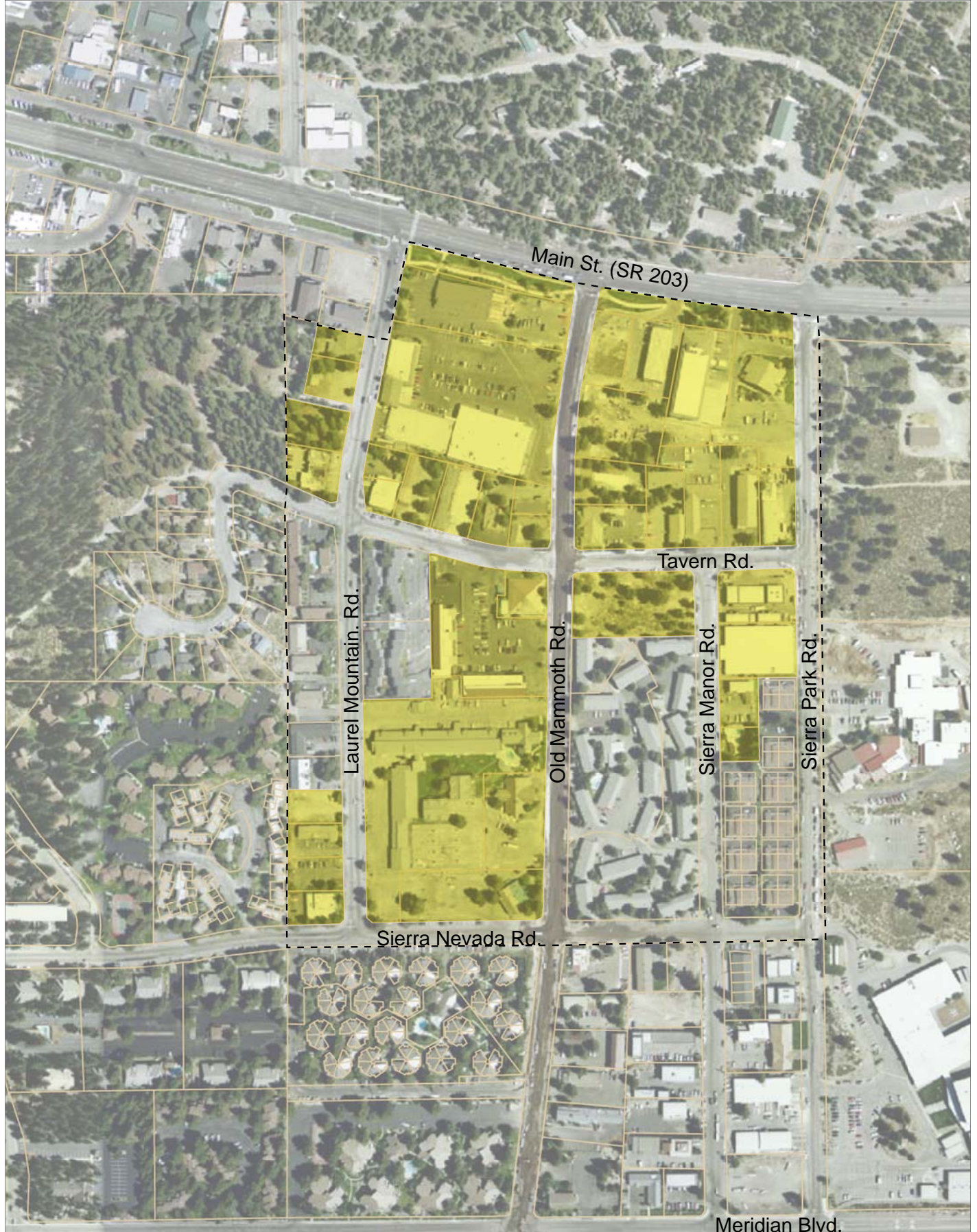
1. Traditional small-scale mixed use "Main Street" development pattern


### Shady Rest characteristics:

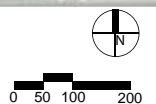
1. A livable in-town neighborhood for the workforce:
  - a. Not fractional, not second homes
  - b. Mechanisms to ensure units remain at determined rates in perpetuity
  - c. Variety of unit size and scale
2. Preservation and restoration of unique site features, including wetlands







 Areas expected to change



## North Old Mammoth Road District Appendix 3: Areas Expected To Change

