

**Downtown NDPs  
Focus Group Meeting #2  
December 15, 2009**

**Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:**

<i>Focus Group</i>		
▪ Bill Sauser	▪ Elizabeth Tenney	▪ Mary Handel
▪ Bill Taylor	▪ Gary Small	▪ Rick Wood
▪ Bruce Woodward	▪ John Mueller	▪ Tony Colasardo
▪ Chuck Lande	▪ John Vereuck	
▪ Dan Dawson	▪ John Walter	
<i>Town Staff</i>	<i>MMSA</i>	<i>MLFPD</i>
▪ Mark Wardlaw	▪ Rebecca Paranick-Poiset	▪ Brent Harper
▪ Ellen Clark		
▪ Jen Daugherty		
▪ Jessica Morriss		

**Introduction and Staff Presentation**

Town staff Mark Wardlaw reviewed the agenda and presented a PowerPoint slide show to the Focus Group. The PowerPoint summarized previous public and focus group input and presented four draft alternative concepts: Polished Plan, Linked Anchors/Median and Roundabouts, Linked Anchors/Greenway, and Walkable Nodes. Each alternative concept included a discussion of street pattern, street sections, parking, pedestrian and bike network, trails and recreation, event venues, and land use, as well as a set of “givens” or fixed assumptions that apply to all alternatives.

**Small Group Exercise**

The Focus Group was divided into two groups. Each group had a facilitator and note taker, who guided the group through an exercise to review and critique the alternatives. One group was asked to focus on the Polished Plan and Linked Anchors/Greenway alternatives, and the other on the Linked Anchors/Median and Roundabouts and Walkable Nodes alternatives. Following the small group discussion, each small group reported back to the larger Focus Group.

**General Consensus**

The general consensus of the Focus Group was support of the Linked Anchors/Greenway and Walkable Nodes alternatives because these alternatives showed significant improvements that can result in positive and high impact change consistent with the DNDPs Guiding Principles. One of the small groups discarded the Linked Anchors/Median and Roundabouts because it failed to meet the goals and Guiding Principles of the DNDP. A “Polished Plan” was considered to be an appropriate step or initial phase of incremental improvements in the district. However, a “Polished Plan” would not result in significant enough improvements to achieve the goals of the DNDP, and therefore, was not considered as an appropriate standalone alternative.

## Critique of Polished Plan

What Works?	What Doesn't Work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More likely to be achieved (lowest cost to implement)</li> <li>▪ Existing road design moves traffic quickly</li> <li>▪ Encourages properties and existing buildings to be upgraded (façade improvements)</li> <li>▪ Opportunities for small and incremental improvements to pedestrian infrastructure; consider boardwalk to connect retail south side of Main St</li> <li>▪ Retail focused on south side of Main St reduces the need for numerous pedestrian crossings</li> <li>▪ Allows for a mix of housing types and affordability levels at Shady Rest Tract</li> <li>▪ Doesn't preclude new development from including additional parking (land costs and construction costs affect whether new parking would be surface or underground)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Doesn't achieve significant change and improvement</li> <li>▪ Doesn't solve poor visibility of store fronts in winter (snow berms)</li> <li>▪ Remains dangerous to cross street to catch bus to ski area; don't encourage more pedestrian crossings on Main St (arterial – dangerous for pedestrians)</li> <li>▪ Large park/open space buffer at northeast corner of Shady Rest Tract will disconnect future housing from commercial uses</li> <li>▪ No improvement to town entry</li> <li>▪ Few parking locations in appropriate places (Main St retail is not walkable from Park &amp; Ride lot)</li> <li>▪ Doesn't support substantial shared parking</li> <li>▪ Doesn't address or encourage relocation of service uses that do not "fit" (e.g. Turner Propane)</li> </ul>

## Critique of Linked Anchors/Median and Roundabouts

What Works?	What Doesn't Work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-consensus on whether roundabouts are pedestrian-friendly</li> <li>▪ Roundabouts could cause traffic to spread because people would avoid them (good and bad)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roundabouts will increase emergency response times</li> <li>▪ Roundabouts do not support goals for feet-first</li> <li>▪ Too many roundabouts are included in this alternative - impractical</li> <li>▪ Not feet first; "Car centric"</li> <li>▪ Principally a traffic smoothing plan; not significant improvements in Main Street character, form or function</li> </ul>

## Critique of Linked Anchors/Greenway

What Works?	What Doesn't Work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Doesn't require significant relocation/restructuring of existing buildings; moves primary travel lanes to buildings rather than moving buildings to road</li> <li>▪ May be feasible way to produce positive aesthetic change while minimizing downzoning or property takings</li> <li>▪ Elimination of frontage roads reduces pavement barrier to cross Main St and creates a pedestrian retail experience (less area to manage snow)</li> <li>▪ Large greenway from town entry to Manzanita seems feasible with topography</li> <li>▪ Allows snow storage to be moved from sides of street to central greenway – this may keep storefronts more visible in winter</li> <li>▪ Can the greenway accommodate skiers?</li> <li>▪ Greenway could accommodate a gondola or other “people-mover” that is attractive to visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May not be able to achieve large greenway concept along the entire length of Main St because slopes/cross-slopes and road width varies</li> <li>▪ Adding new uses to north side of Main St may create more pedestrian desire to cross Main St unsafely</li> <li>▪ Greenway width, size, and design can vary along Main St (may not need parking at west end of Main St); doesn't need to be linear or symmetrical</li> <li>▪ Landscaping and trees in greenway may be damaged if used for snow storage in winter</li> <li>▪ Snow storage in greenway may block views of store fronts in winter</li> </ul>

## Critique of Walkable Nodes

What Works?	What Doesn't Work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Walkable nodes are “feet first”</li> <li>▪ Node concept could improve success of retail by creating a traditional main street character and bringing buildings to the street</li> <li>▪ Allows compact and focused development that encourages feet-first mobility and active neighborhoods</li> <li>▪ Main Street would be crossable and walkable from Old Mammoth Road to Quality Inn – retail street</li> <li>▪ Walkable nodes would increase internal capture and decrease traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nodes need to be integrated and not completely “self-contained” to encourage walking between districts</li> <li>▪ Removal of frontage roads may take away from businesses</li> <li>▪ Concern Main Street may become more congested without frontage roads</li> <li>▪ Squareabouts/squares will increase emergency response times</li> <li>▪ Roundabout at 203/Sierra Park Road shouldn't be the “entry experience”</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Squareabouts/squares would calm traffic</li> <li>▪ Sense of arrival and location of gateway is key; roundabout or town square would make a strong entry statement</li> <li>▪ A comprehensive parking management strategy is necessary, including strategically located parking structures</li> <li>▪ Shady Rest Tract - Mix of housing types and affordability levels, no retail, wetlands stay wetland but can be used as a park, may need additional park space besides wetland park</li> <li>▪ Shady Rest Tract – should be housing mitigation receiver site</li> </ul>	
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**Shady Rest Tract (Subarea 3) General Consensus**

The Shady Rest Tract should include a mix of housing types and affordability levels. The wetland area should be preserved and could be used as a park. Parks should be included on the Shady Rest site.

**Other Comments**

- Street design should support uses and uses should respect the street design.
- The Rite Aid/Do it Center block (Main St/OMR/Tavern/Laurel) should be included as an opportunity site because it is underdeveloped.
- Why direct cars onto Sierra Park Road (i.e. take cars off Main St and OMR where business are located)? [Mark response – need to better manage traffic flow on Main St in order to allow for changes].
- Where should the town entry statement on Main St be – Sierra Park Road or OMR intersection?
- Landscape sequence should go from “wild” to “manicured” as you approach and enter town.
- Parking management is a significant issue that needs to be addressed.
- Traffic Engineer will need to review traffic flows associated with each alternative.
- The Hart Howerton Concept is the only concept showing the entire Shady Rest Tract as a park.
- Signage and wayfinding is needed.
- Sidewalks on Main Street should be greater than 12 feet. Not like Old Mammoth Road.
- Existing landscape parkways on Main Street require significant maintenance and resources. Future design should not be maintenance and resource intensive.

- Group feels that a gondola is unlikely to happen, but would like to discuss it in more detail.
- Parking needs to be better managed.
- May need a redevelopment agency to help implement improvements.

**Follow Ups/Next Meeting**

- Next meeting to be scheduled towards the end of January 2010