
III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT APPLICANT

The Project applicant for the proposed Snowcreek VIII, Snowcreek Master Plan Update - 2007 Project (Project) is:

Snowcreek Investment Company L.P.
Charles R. Lande, President
PO Box 100 PMB 605
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

B. PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Project is intended to complete a 30-year Master Plan, providing amenities and activities for local residents, visitors and owners. The Project consists of adoption by the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town) of the Snowcreek VIII, Snowcreek Master Plan Update - 2007 (2007 Master Plan). The 2007 Master Plan proposes revisions to the Updated Master Plan for Snowcreek at Mammoth (1981 Master Plan), which was an update of the original Snowcreek Master Plan (1974 Master Plan). The 2007 Master Plan or Project proposes standards for buildout of the remaining Snowcreek Master Plan area (development area that is also referred to as “Snowcreek VIII”) and is intended to fulfill the vision of the previously approved 1974 Master Plan and current 1981 Master Plan (refer to Table III-1).

It has been over 25 years since the last update of the Snowcreek Master Plan, and quite naturally, important changes have occurred, which have had significant effects on the Project. The Project incorporates shifts in emphasis based upon recent resort trends and local conditions as well as revisions to the final phase or phases of the 1981 Master Plan.

The Project consists of the following land uses, which are discussed in detail further in this section.

- Market/General Store (Store) and a Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center (Interpretive Center)
- 400-room/suite luxury Hotel (Hotel) and Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units, including conference facilities, restaurant/lounge, retail shops, fitness center, full service public spa and public ice skating pond
- 850 residential units providing ownership and longer term rental opportunities in a resort setting
- Resident’s Club with pool, spa, fitness facility, kitchen/outdoor barbeque facilities, vacation rental office, and snack bar

- Expansion of nine-hole golf course into a championship 18-hole course, including Golf Pro Shop
- Outfitters' Cabin with outdoor equipment rental and sales, and trailhead access to public lands of the Inyo National Forest in the Sherwin Range

The Project being evaluated in this Draft EIR pertains only to the remaining portion of the current 1981 Master Plan development areas. The Project does not include the existing/entitled Snowcreek Master Plan in which development has either already occurred or is currently in progress. The existing/entitled developments include the residential areas of Snowcreek I through VII, the Snowcreek Athletic Club, the Catholic Church, the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) Fire Station 2, Aspen Village Workforce Housing, the Mammoth Community Water District (MCWD) Wastewater Treatment Plant and the existing privately owned publicly accessible nine-hole golf course (refer to Table III-1). While the nine-hole golf course is considered an existing feature, the environmental impacts related to merging it with undeveloped land to create a privately owned publicly accessible 18-hole course is considered part of the Project. Reconfiguration could include modification to the irrigation system or increasing native vegetation in the "rough." However, major recontouring and reconfiguration of the existing nine-hole course is not anticipated.

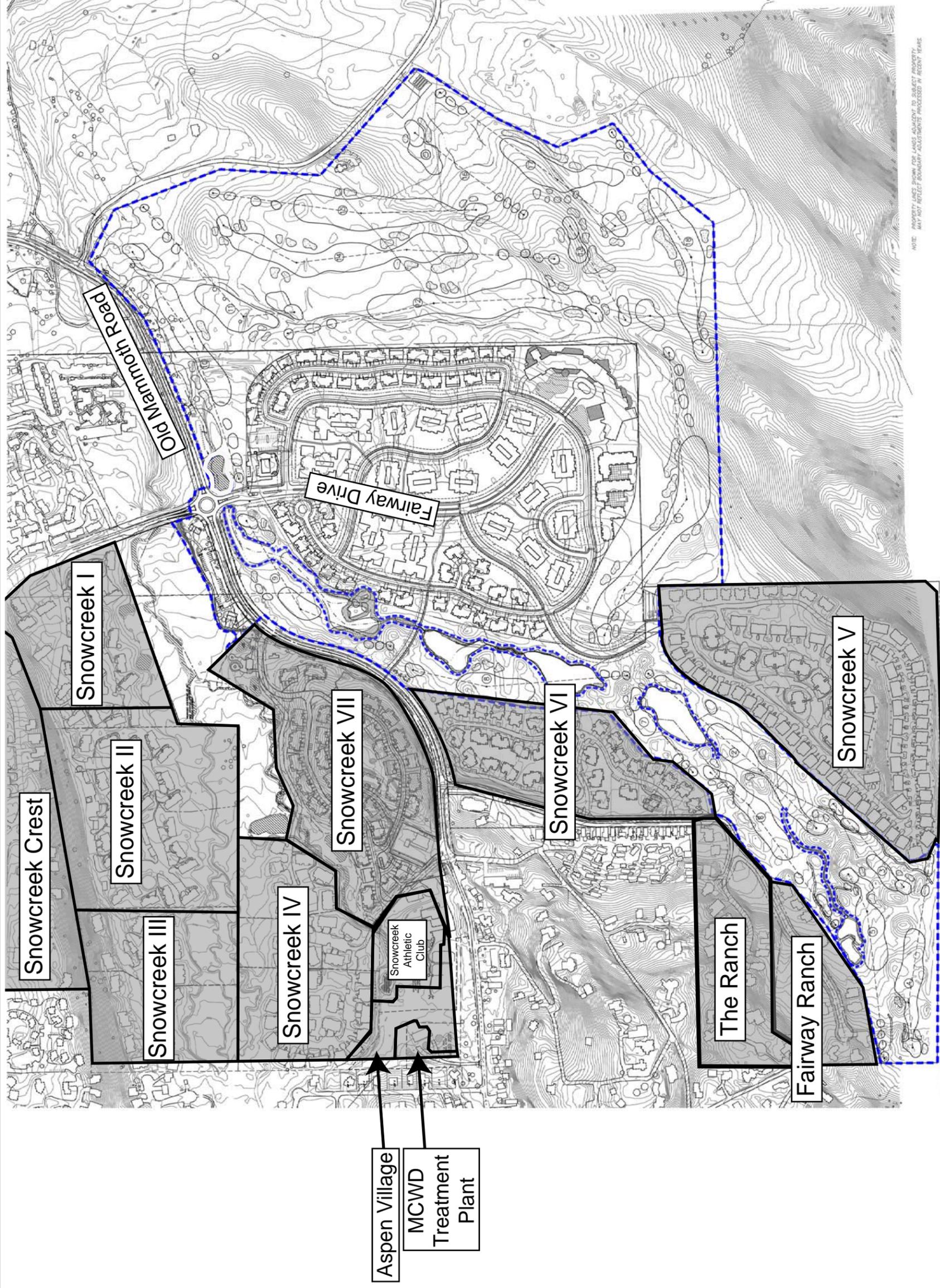
This section provides a detailed description of the proposed resort, recreation, retail and public amenities components to be developed on the approximate 237-acre Project site (refer to Table III-2). Figures III-1 and III-2 represent the land use development of the approved Master Plans and the proposed land use development of the Project, respectively.

**Table III-1
Development Areas of the 1974 and 1981 Master Plans**

Development Area by Year Developed/Entitled	Dwelling Units (DU)
Original 1974 Snowcreek Master Plan	
1978 - Snowcreek I	107
1979 - Snowcreek II	123
1979 - Snowcreek Athletic Club	
1982 - Snowcreek III	86
Existing 1981 Updated Master Plan for Snowcreek at Mammoth	
1986 - Snowcreek IV	138
1987 - The Ranch	19
1988 - Snowcreek Crest	58
1988 - MCWD Wastewater Treatment Plant	
1989 - MLFPD Fire Station 2	
1990 - Snowcreek V-1	150
1991 - Nine-hole Golf Course	
1992 - Fairway Ranch	
1992 - Catholic Church	
1997 - Snowcreek V-2	144
2004 - Snowcreek VI	106
2004 - Aspen Village	72 ⁽¹⁾
2006 - Snowcreek VII	118
Master Plan Build-Out To Date	1,145⁽²⁾
Total Master Plan Units Allotted	2,368
Total Master Plan Units Remaining	1,223⁽³⁾
Total Non-Residential Square Footage Remaining	150,000
<p><i>Notes:</i></p> <p>(1) Aspen Village has two phases; 48 unit phase and 24 unit phase for a total of 72 units.</p> <p>(2) Developed, entitled and/or currently under construction</p> <p>(3) Totals remaining exceed amount proposed under the Project (i.e., 237 acres, 75,000 sf non-residential space, and 1,050 residential units.</p> <p>Sources: 1974 and 1981 Snowcreek Master Plan EIRs, Town of Mammoth Lakes Department of Community Development, and Snowcreek Resort Conceptual Plan, December 2006.</p>	

**Table III-2
Proposed 2007 Master Plan**

Development Area	Square Feet	Dwelling Units (DU)
Non-Residential Space		
Commercial Retail		
Market/General Store	3,500	
Hotel		
Spa/Wellness Center	12,900	
Retail	10,000	
Restaurant/Bar/Lounge	10,000	
Conference & Meeting Space	25,000	
Golf Pro Shop	3,000	
Activities		
Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center	900	
Resident's Club/Management Offices	8,000	
Recreation		
18-Hole Golf Course		
Outfitters' Cabin	1,700	
Total 2007 Master Plan Non-Residential Space	75,000⁽⁴⁾	
Residential/Condo/Hotel Unit Space		
Hotel Rooms/Suites	212,500	125 ⁽¹⁾
Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units	127,500	75 ⁽¹⁾
Back of the House/Hotel Operations	100,225	
Homes (Residential Condo)		850 ⁽²⁾
Total 2007 Master Plan Residential Space	440,225	1,050
Total 2007 Master Plan		1,050
Total 1974 and 1981 Master Plans Already Built/Entitled		1,145⁽³⁾
Proposed Master Plan Build-Out		2,195
<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) Hotel would accommodate 250 guest rooms/suites (125 dwelling units) and 150 Private Residence Club (PRC) suites (75 dwelling units); total 400 rooms/suites. Under Town Municipal Code a hotel room/suite or private residence room equals ½ of a unit, thus the 400 Hotel rooms/suites equates to 200 dwelling units.</p> <p>(2) Homes built under the 2007 Master Plan are comprised of High Density Stacked Flats, Medium Density Stacked Flats and Townhomes, and Low Density Stacked Flats and Townhomes. Of the 850 units, 80 are designated as workforce units for purchase. The remainder of the workforce housing obligation will be satisfied off site.</p> <p>(3) Total built or entitled</p> <p>(4) Specific square footage numbers are estimated and serve to study a maximum non-residential square footage of 75,000 square feet. All of Project will be parked per Town Municipal Code, or exceeding the Town Municipal Code.</p> <p>Sources: 1974, 1981 and 2007 Snowcreek Master Plans, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes Department of Community Development, December 2006.</p>		



Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.

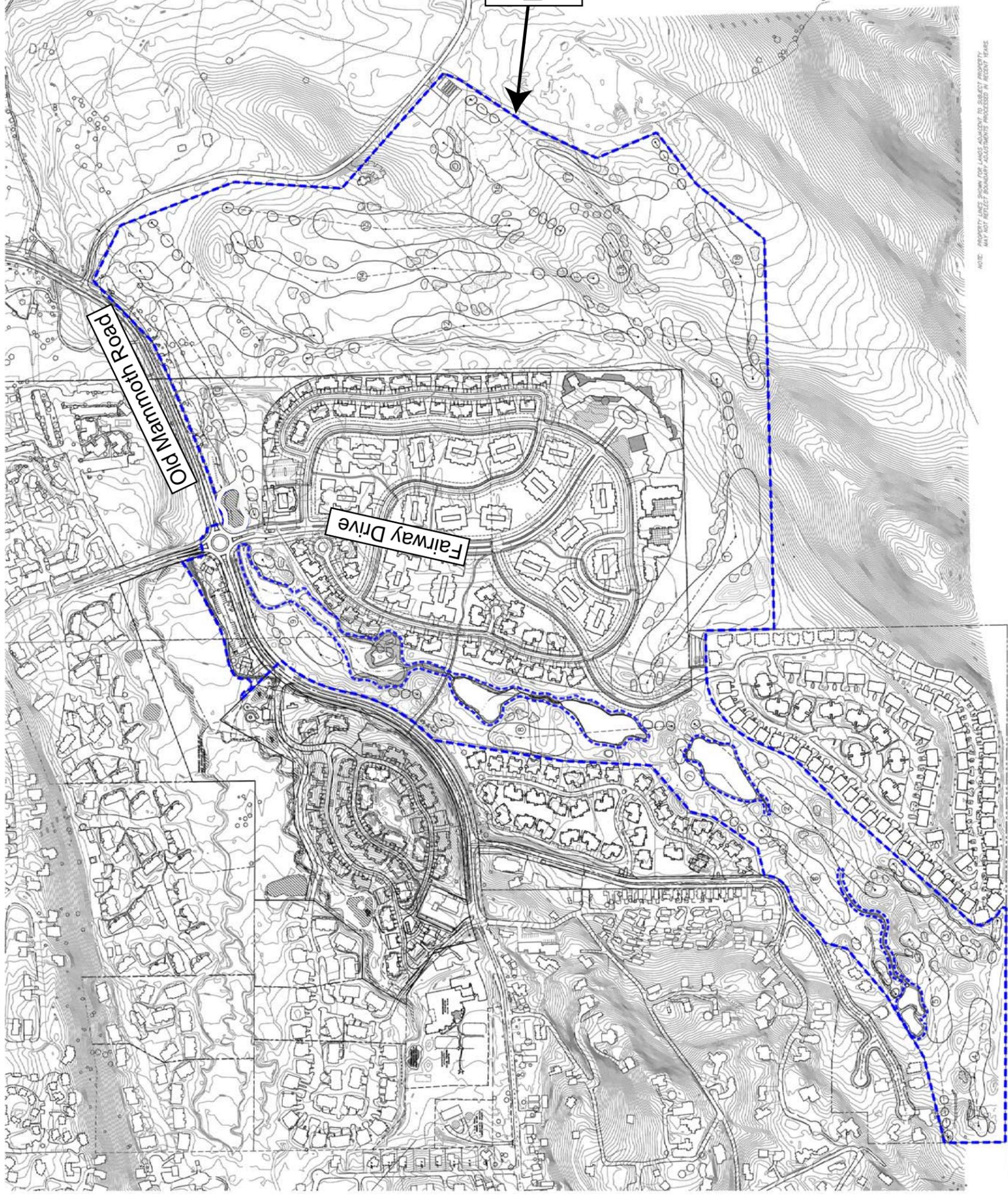


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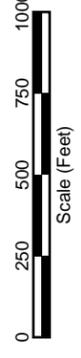


Figure III-1
Developed or Under Construction Areas for
Snowcreek Master Plan

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Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



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Figure III-2
Proposed New Development Areas
for the 2007 Master Plan

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Site History

1974 Snowcreek Master Plan

Dempsey Construction Corporation, the original developer of Snowcreek, began construction in the area in the late 1970s of the project contemplated by the Snowcreek Master Plan. The Snowcreek Master Plan proposed 2,400 dwelling units on 355 acres (a gross residential density of 6.76 units per acre),¹ 150,000 square feet of commercial space and a one-acre service station site. Three development phases were eventually completed under the 1974 Master Plan consisting of approximately 13 percent² of the total number of residential units planned for the Project (refer to Table III-1 and Figure III-1). The 1974 Master Plan included a 40-acre parcel at the southern edge of the property which was traded to the United States Forest Service (USFS) in exchange for a 30-acre parcel,³ two school sites and one Town site.

1981 Snowcreek Master Plan

In 1981, Dempsey Construction Corporation proposed an updated Snowcreek Master Plan. The 1981 Master Plan reduced the number of proposed dwelling units from 2,400 to 2,332, which, in light of the reduced acreage, had the effect of maintaining the Project density at the same 6.76 units per acre approved in the 1974 Master Plan (refer to Table III-1). In addition, the 1981 Master Plan included the following changes:

- 2 acres designated as a Catholic church site
- 4.1 acres designated for employee housing
- A site designated for the Snowcreek Athletic Club
- An area designated for the first nine-holes of the Snowcreek Golf Course
- Old Mammoth Road was realigned to alleviate hazardous driving conditions
- A roadway was added to provide access to Snowcreek V

The environmental impacts of the proposed 1981 Master Plan were studied in an EIR. The 1981 EIR emphasized that increased densities were not being requested, and that the mitigation measures adopted in

¹ This consisted of 1,950 residential units, 300 condominium-hotel units and 150 motor inn units.

² This percentage was calculated by dividing the 316 unit developed in the first three phases of the 1974 Master Plan by the 1,950 residential units, 300 condominium-hotel units and 150 motor inn units proposed at that time ($316/2400 = 0.1366$)

³ The 30-acre parcel is identified as Development Area 10 in the 1981 Master Plan (Figure 1).

the 1974 EIR to protect environmentally sensitive meadow lands along Mammoth Creek would remain in place.

After the EIR was approved, the Dempsey Construction Corporation entered into a Development Agreement with Mono County in 1982. A Development Agreement (DA) is a contract between a local government unit (LGU) and a developer. A DA provides security to both parties. The DA provides the LGU with a legally binding document that the developer would provide infrastructure and/or pay fees required by a new project. The DA provides the developer with a legally binding document that they can build the project even if the LGU passes a growth-control initiative.

Mono County (County) entered into the DA because the County found that the 1974 Master Plan would result in the creation of a physical environment that would "...conform to and complement the goals of the community, providing housing, recreational and passive open space, sites for schools and religious worship, create an environment sensitive to human needs and values, and would protect adjacent land uses from adverse impacts." In addition, the County found that the 1974 Master Plan would be "...in the best interests of the County and would provide for orderly growth and development of the area consistent with the County's planning goals and objectives."

The DA required public works improvements, utilities and facilities, and was valid for 20 years. When the Town incorporated in 1984, the Town accepted and adopted the DA (Resolution #84-50). The terms of the DA were not extended after 20 years, thus the DA expired in 2002.

The 1981 Master Plan added essential public uses, including 0.91 acres of land for the construction of the MLFPD's Fire Station Number 2 and 1.53 acres for the MCWD Wastewater Treatment Plant. These properties were made available to the MLFPD and the MCWD.

Approval of the 1981 Master Plan allowed for the construction of a total of 2,332 dwelling units plus the workforce housing density bonus which increased the total number of units allowed to 2,368. To date, 1,145 have been constructed or are under construction with 1,223 units remaining (refer to Table III-2 and Figure III-1). Subsequent to the approval of the 1981 Master Plan, the workforce housing site was relocated to the west of the Snowcreek Athletic Club and approval of a 4.87 acre project in that area was made.

2005 Land Exchange

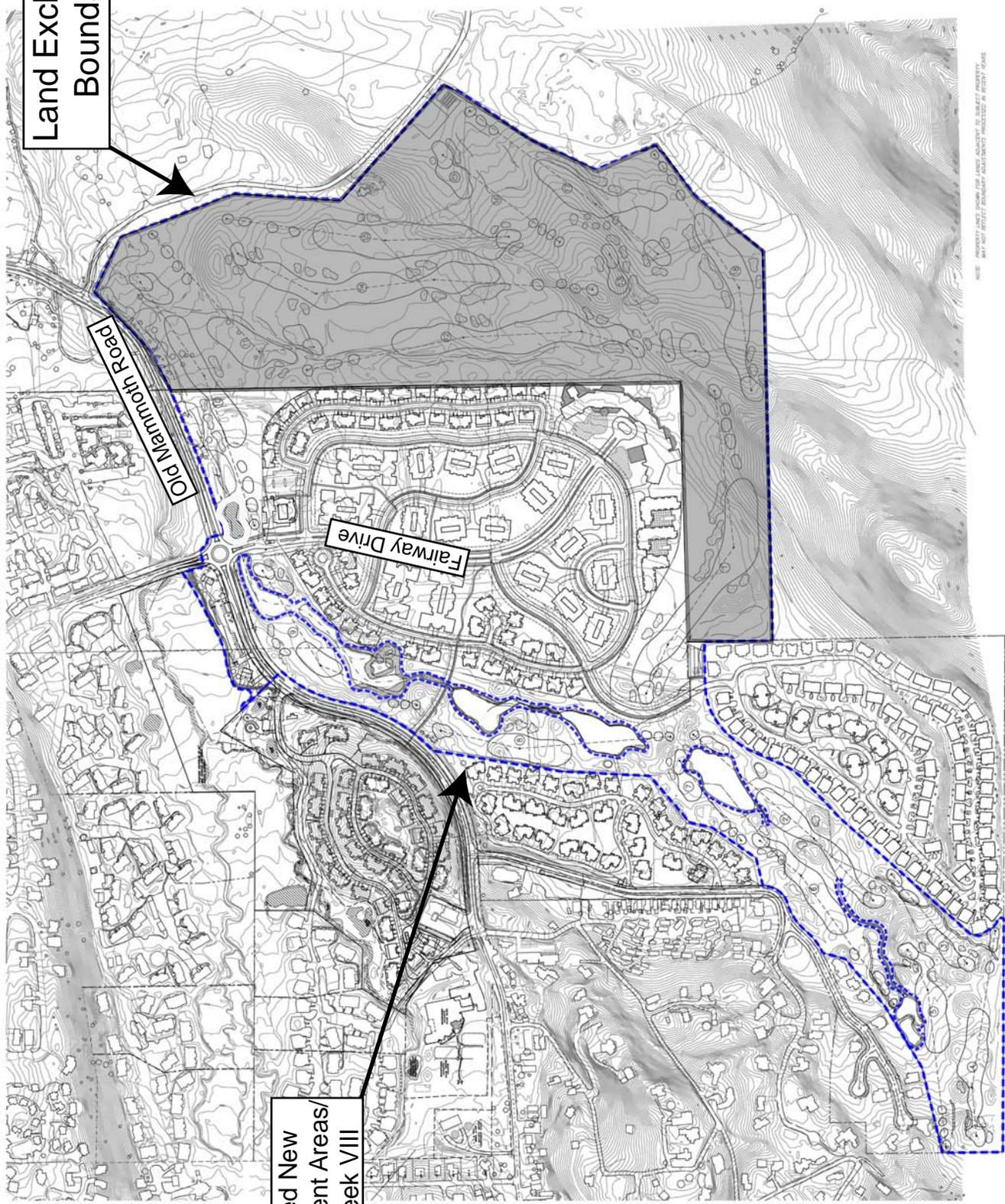
In 2005, a land exchange (2005 Land Exchange) was completed between the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Snowcreek Investment Company in order to acquire enough land for a nine-hole addition to create an 18-hole golf course (refer to Figure III-3). The 2005 Land Exchange resulted in the acquisition of 94 acres from the USFS for golf course/recreation use. After the 2005 Land Exchange, Snowcreek Investment Company entered into a covenant with the Town that protected the exchange parcel from being developed with residential housing, commercial lodging, transient occupancy, or being further

subdivided as this land is outside of the Town's Urban Growth Boundary. The covenant was initiated as a part of the 2005 Land Exchange process, and is monitored by the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (see Appendix K).

At the time of the 1981 Master Plan, the Snowcreek village center, the remaining undeveloped Snowcreek area (i.e., Snowcreek VIII), was expected to provide commercial services and a ski base for the future Sherwin Bowl Ski Area (ski area). An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)⁴ for the ski area was adopted by the Inyo National Forest in 1990, but the ski area's development has not been realized. The Project recognizes that the ski base component is not a realistic expectation and envisions Snowcreek VIII as a destination resort and a key anchor in the Town's economic development strategy.

⁴ An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required for projects subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

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Land Exchange Boundary

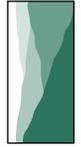
Old Nantonn Road

Fairway Drive

Proposed New Development Areas/Snowcreek VIII

NOTE: PROPERTY LINES SHOWN FOR LAND ADJACENT TO SUBJECT PROPERTY MAY NOT REFLECT CURRENTLY APPLICABLE RECORD RIGHTS

Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006; CAJA 2007.



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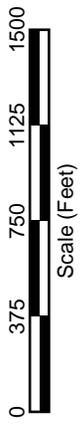


Figure III-3
Land Exchange Boundary

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2007 Snowcreek Master Plan

As discussed earlier, the Project is intended to both fulfill and update the vision of the previously approved 1974 and 1981 Master Plans (refer to Table III-3). This Draft EIR provides information concerning the environmental impacts of the Project to a level of detail necessary to satisfy the Town's requirements as the lead agency in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), applicable General Plan Policies and Town Municipal Code Title 17 – Zoning. The Project proposes the development of 850 residential dwelling units, 400 Hotel rooms/suites, and up to 75,000 square feet of non-residential uses.

**Table III-3
Proposed 2007 Master Plan Development Summary**

Total Master Plan Units Allotted	2,368
Master Plan Build-Out To Date	1,145
Total Master Plan Units Remaining to be Built	1,223
Total Proposed Units to be Built under 2007 Master Plan	1,050
Reduction in Units from Previous Master Plans to 2007 Master Plan	173
Non-residential Space Allowed Under Previous Master Plans	150,000 square feet
Non-residential Space Proposed Under 2007 Master Plan	75,000 square feet
Reduction in Non-residential Space from Previous Master Plans to 2007 Master Plan	75,000 square feet
Recreation Space Proposed Under Previous Master Plans	Sherwin Ski Bowl nine-hole golf course
Recreational Space Proposed Under 2007 Master Plan	18-hole golf course
<i>Sources: 1974, 1981 and 2007 Snowcreek Master Plans, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes Department of Community Development, December 2006.</i>	

The Project area is composed of the following Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) and associated land use areas shown in parentheses: 40-040-20 (Area A), 40-070-10 (Area J & G), 40-070-11 (Area B-F, H & K), 40-070-12 (Area I), 40-070-13 (Area I), 40-070-23 (Area I), 40-140-04 (Area I & L), and 40-140-05 (Area I) (refer to Figure III-4).

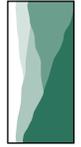
The Project site is primarily undeveloped. The parcels south of Old Mammoth Road were most recently used as pastureland for cattle grazing. Previous historic uses of the Project site are discussed in more detail in Section IV.E (Cultural Resources) of this Draft EIR.

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Legend	
A	Market/General Store Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center
B	Hotel Guest Suites Private Residence Club Retail Lounge Restaurants Wellness Center Fitness Center Pool Spa Ice Rink/Pond
C/D	High Density Stacked Flats
E/F	Medium Density Stacked Flats, Townhouse
G/H	Low Density Stacked Flats, Townhouse
I	18-Hole Golf Course
J	Resident's Club/Management Offices Vacation Rental Office Fitness Club Pool Spa Grill
K	Golf Club Pro Shop Restaurant
L	Outfitters' Cabin Equipment Rental Hiking Mountain Biking Cross Country Skiing Snow Shoeing Sledging Trail Head

Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



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Figure III-4
Illustrated Conceptual Plan

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The specific land uses for the Project are described as follows:

Image and Character

The Project is intended to create a destination resort within Mammoth's mountain resort community, providing a broad range of activities, services and facilities for residents and visitors year round.

The Project's profile is intended to be low on the landscape, with the Hotel located near the back of the site. The Hotel is designed to be distant from Old Mammoth Road, Sherwin Creek Road and surrounding neighbors to maintain a natural, rustic atmosphere while creating an iconic landmark with the Sherwin Mountain Range as its backdrop.

The Project has been designed around the core of Old Mammoth Road, neighboring developments and the existing Snowcreek I through VII areas. With the previously approved Master Plans serving as the foundation, the Project is intended to be a well designed community that integrates resort, including hotel, recreation and retail, as well as residential components.

In addition to public amenities provided in the expanded and enhanced golf course facilities, the Project proposes to include a Store and an Interpretive Center, an Outfitters' Cabin and the provision of Hotel rooms/suites, restaurants, retail, and conference and meeting space. Each of these public amenities components is described in greater detail under the corresponding heading below.

Furthermore, the applicant is currently working with MCWD on the expansion, improvement and distribution of MCWD's recycled water (i.e., tertiary treated water) for use in irrigating the 18-hole golf course. If an agreement between the two parties is finalized and recycled water from MCWD's Wastewater Treatment Plant becomes available at a reasonable cost, the irrigation needs for the golf course may be provided with the recycled water, and thus could result in the availability of untreated ground water that could be treated and used to meet other project or future needs of the Town. This issue is discussed further in Section IV.N (Utilities).

Market/General Store and the Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center

The Store and Interpretive Center are located on parcel (APN 40-040-20) north of Old Mammoth Road and west of Minaret Road. This parcel is zoned Resort with an Open Space Stream Corridor (OSSC) overlay. The Store and Interpretive Center would be on the already disturbed portion along Old Mammoth Road; an approximately 150 feet deep and 720 feet wide strip. Because this is greater than the approximate 25-40 foot wide Resort zone, it would encroach into the OSSC overlay zone. However, the OSSC overlay does not prohibit development. The development would not go beyond the wetland delineation line verified by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (refer to Figure III-5). A conservation easement may be recorded against the environmentally sensitive property and the land may be transferred to the Town or a conservation group agreeable to both parties which could allow for public

access. This issue is discussed further in Sections IV.D (Biological Resources), IV.H (Land Use/Planning), and IV.L (Recreation) of this Draft EIR.

The Store and Interpretive Center would be public and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles. Pedestrians would have access via the bike trails and crosswalks at the proposed roundabout at the Old Mammoth Road/Minaret Road intersection leading to and from the proposed residences and Hotel area (refer to Figure III-4). Automobiles would have access from the two driveways off of Old Mammoth Road. Bicyclists would also use these two driveways, as well as the trail/sidewalk entranceway off of Minaret Road. Additionally, this development site includes a .39 acre surface parking lot.

Market/General Store – Retail Component

The Store draws inspiration from the historic Lutz Market during the early settlement days of Mammoth Camp. It is intended to serve residents and visitors throughout the “Old Mammoth” area of the Town with food, deli, drinks, and sundries. The Store, a stand-alone building approximately 3,500 square feet in size, would consist of retail and storage space, and would provide 20 parking spaces.⁵ In addition to the two driveways off of Old Mammoth Road, the Store would have a separate service drive to the rear of the building. Use of this drive would be restricted to service vehicles only for deliveries.

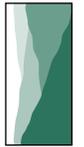
Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center

The Interpretive Center would be a stand-alone building approximately 900 square feet in size and would provide six parking spaces. The Interpretive Center would be an interactive educational facility, providing residents and visitors with information and exhibits regarding the history and resources of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth Creek Corridor. The Interpretive Center would consist of an entry way, two restrooms, and space to provide educational information and tours relating to the history of Mammoth Lakes and the qualities of the natural characteristics of the region – both biological and ecological.

⁵ One parking space per 150 sq. ft. Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code 17.20.040.Q.1



Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



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Figure III-5
Market/General Store and the Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center

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Hotel

Placed at the edge of the community, the Hotel is intended to complement the Mammoth Lakes experience. The Hotel would serve as an anchor and an architectural icon for the Town. The Hotel is designed to be distant from Old Mammoth Road, Sherwin Creek Road and its surrounding neighbors to maintain a natural, rustic atmosphere with the Sherwin Mountain Range as its backdrop.

The Hotel would include 400 guest rooms/suites: 250 Hotel room/suite units and 150 Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units. The Hotel would include a spa/wellness center, retail space, restaurant/bar/lounge, conference and meeting space, a golf pro shop, a fitness area and pool, and a public ice skating pond. The Hotel would consist of approximately 212,500 square feet of guest and residence rooms/suites, 127,500 square feet of Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units, and 100,225 square feet of back of Hotel operations (refer to Table III-2). Figure III-6 represents a schematic design of the ground floor level that illustrates the variety of amenities a hotel of this nature may include.

In addition to the Store and Interpretive Center previously described, the Hotel's rooms/suites, restaurants, retail, and conference and meeting space will be available for public use and would also be considered community amenities as they could be rented by community members or groups. These facilities would provide opportunities and venues for residents and visitors to the area alike. The provision of conference and meeting space could increase opportunities to attract corporate business to the area. In addition, this component of the Project will enhance revenues to the Town through increased sales tax and transient occupancy tax (TOT).

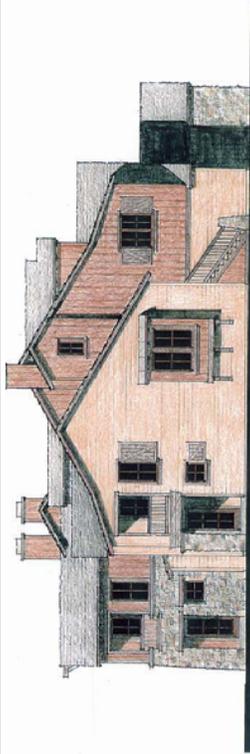
Residential Condominiums/Townhomes

The Project includes 850 residential dwelling units which could include a combination of condominium units, single family dwellings, stacked flats and townhomes providing a wide range of home ownership opportunities suitable as either primary or secondary residences. The homes would vary in size from 650 square feet (minimum) to 3,500 square feet (maximum). Housing density would range throughout the Project site from low density to high density (refer to Figures III-7 through III-9).

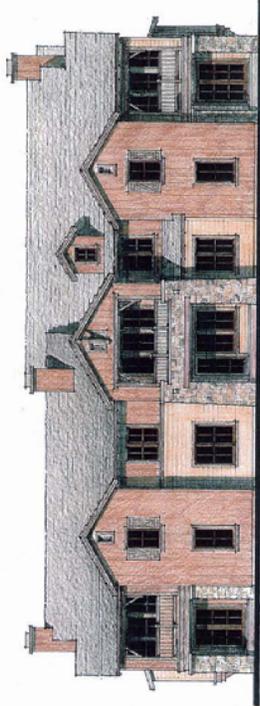
Of the 850 residential units, 80 units would be designated on site as workforce housing units available for purchase. The balance of the required workforce housing units would be provided off site. The Project would include resort services and amenities, including a Resident's Club with a snack bar, pool, spa and grill. The Resident's Club feature is discussed in more detail below under the heading "recreation."

Housing density for the Project site was calculated by dividing the total number of dwelling units by the total number of acres in the Project. The Project proposes 1,050 dwelling units (850 condominiums and townhome units combined with 200 Hotel dwelling units) developed over 143 acres. This acreage does not include the 94 acres acquired in the USFS Land Exchange previously discussed. Overall housing density for the Project would be approximately 7.35 dwelling units/acre (1,050/143). The Project combined with the existing/entitled residential development results in an overall Snowcreek Master Plan density of approximately 6.36 dwelling units/acre (2,195/345).

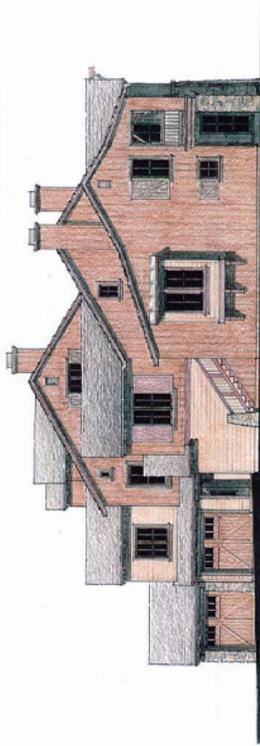
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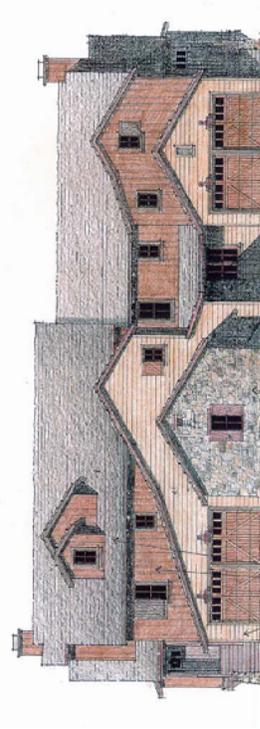
LEFT ELEVATION
FOURPLEX BUILDING



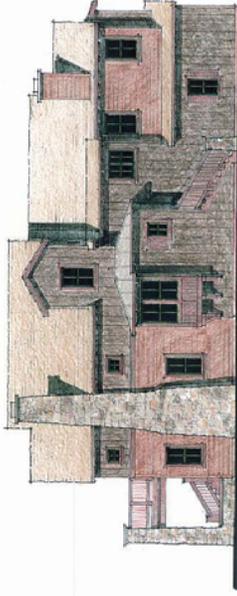
REAR ELEVATION
FOURPLEX BUILDING



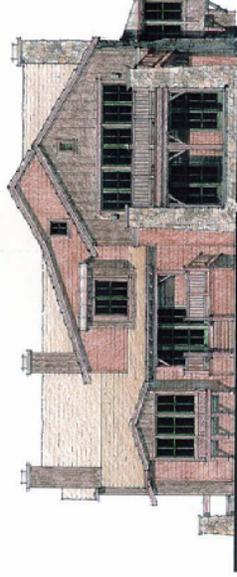
RIGHT ELEVATION
FOURPLEX BUILDING



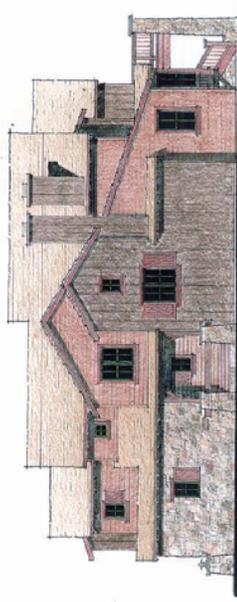
FRONT ELEVATION
FOURPLEX BUILDING



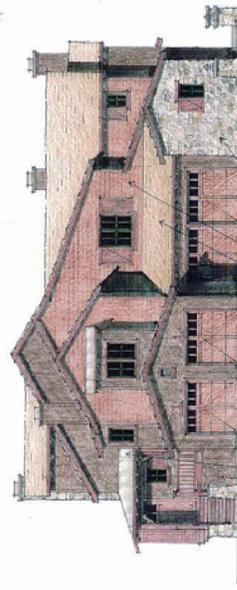
LEFT ELEVATION
DUPLIX BUILDING



REAR ELEVATION
DUPLIX BUILDING

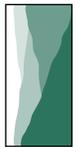


RIGHT ELEVATION
DUPLIX BUILDING



FRONT ELEVATION
DUPLIX BUILDING

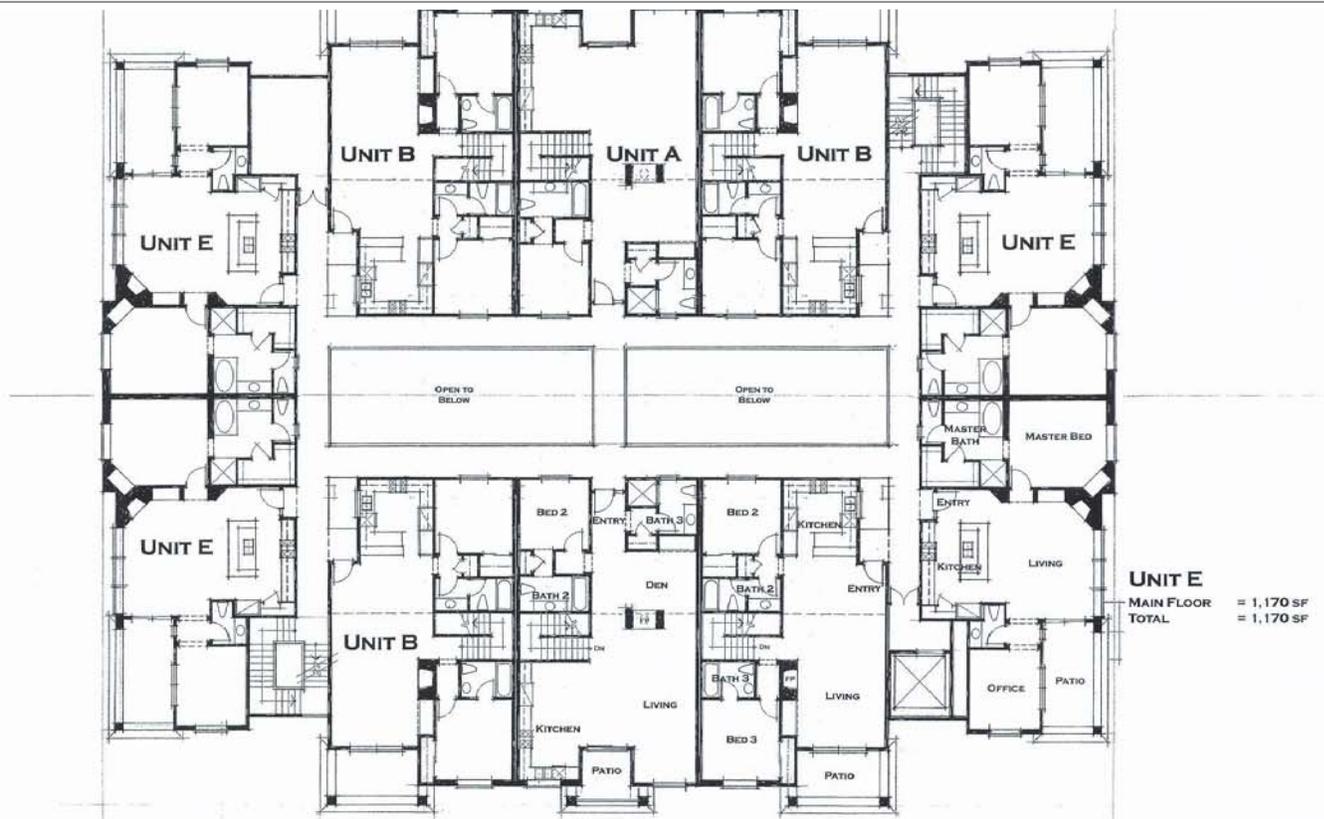
Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



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Figure III-7
Low Density Units

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FLOOR PLAN

TOTAL: 20 UNITS PER BUILDING

UNIT A	MAIN FLOOR = 1,288 SF	LOWER FLOOR = 678 SF	TOTAL = 1,966 SF
UNIT B	MAIN FLOOR = 1,230 SF	LOWER FLOOR = 624 SF	TOTAL = 1,854 SF
UNIT C	MAIN FLOOR = 1,288 SF	UPPER FLOOR = 497 SF	TOTAL = 1,785 SF
UNIT D	MAIN FLOOR = 1,230 SF	LOWER FLOOR = 484 SF	TOTAL = 1,714 SF



Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



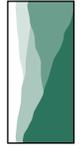
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Figure III-8
Medium Density
Multi-Family Units

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Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



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Figure III-9
High Density
Multi-Family Units

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Recreation

The Project is designed to enhance and complement recreational opportunities already available in the Town. The Project includes several “stand-alone” recreational amenities such as an expanded privately owned publicly accessible golf course, a clubhouse and attendant facilities, an outfitters’ cabin, a resident’s club/snack bar, a hotel with ice skating, swimming, workout facilities, and a spa and wellness center. Detailed descriptions of these features are provided below.

Golf Course & Golf Clubhouse

The existing privately owned publicly accessible nine-hole golf course on the west and north portions of the Project site would be enlarged to include an additional nine holes and a maintenance facility on the east and south edges of the Project site to create a privately owned publicly accessible 18-hole golf course. The 18-hole golf course would encompass approximately 155 acres. The course would be designed to conserve water and improve the use of native vegetation. The existing nine-hole course may be modified and the existing temporary clubhouse would be removed and replaced with an approximately 3,000 square foot golf pro shop and lounge. The new portion of the golf course and possibly portions of the existing course would be re-graded and contoured to create topographic undulations in character with the surrounding landforms. However, as previously stated, major reconfiguration and recontouring is not anticipated for the existing nine holes. Water would be routed throughout the course and fed into new ponds which would store irrigation water and provide drainage retention (refer to Figure III-4).

Outfitters’ Cabin

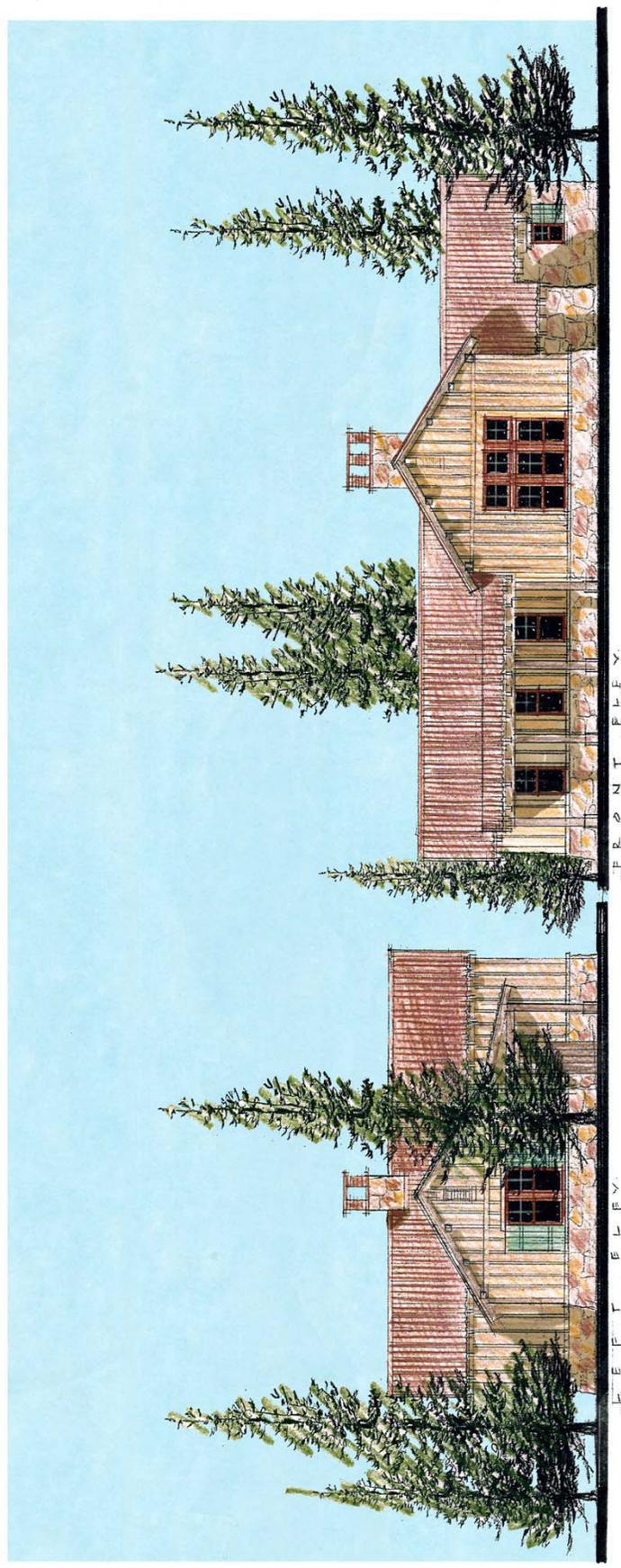
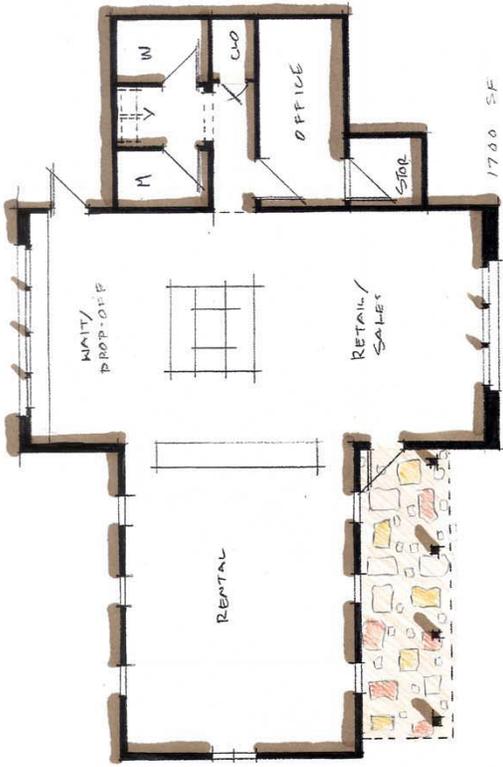
The approximately 1,700 square foot Outfitters’ Cabin (refer to Figure III-10) would act as a portal to the outdoor activities available on public lands of the Inyo National Forest in the Sherwin Mountain Range for use by all residents of the Town, as well as by residents of the Project and the general public. As a portal, the Outfitters’ Cabin would provide public parking and would serve as the hub of year-round off-site recreational activities such as hiking, biking, fishing, cross country skiing, snow-shoeing, hay rides and sleigh rides. Retail services and equipment rental would be provided to serve these types of activities. The Outfitters’ Cabin would be established on the approximate 155 acres where the 18-hole golf course would be developed (refer to Figure III-4).

Resident’s Club

The Resident’s Club is for Snowcreek VIII residents and would consist of a pool, spa, fitness facility, kitchen, bar, and outdoor barbeque/cabana. In addition, this structure would accommodate the rental office/facility management offices (refer to Figure III-11).

Public Plazas, Walkways, Ponds and Streams

A key concept of the Project is to connect people with nature and neighbor with neighbor, and encourage people to walk and bike. As such, the careful placement of hiking trails, bike trails, along with paths, sidewalks and public plazas would aim to connect the Hotel and residents with the Town, as well as, with the proposed Outfitters' Cabin, Store, Interpretive Center, and the existing Snowcreek Athletic Club, Sierra Meadows Ranch Equestrian Center, the Sherwin Mountain Range and Mammoth Creek. The walkways and bike paths will connect internally and with existing or planned Town paths and with nature trails. The trails and sidewalks will be accented with ponds and natural plantings.



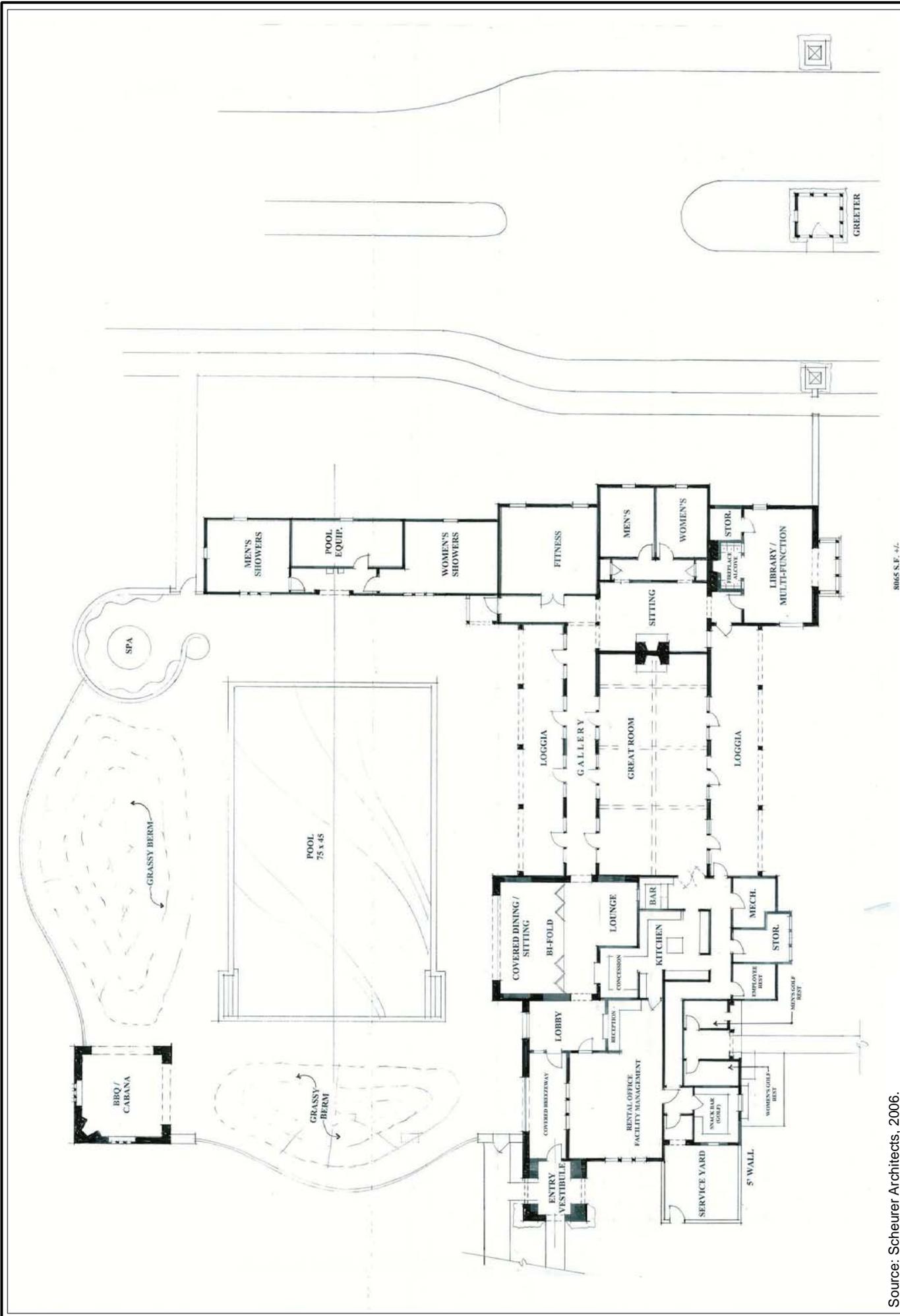
Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



CHRISTOPHER A. JOSEPH & ASSOCIATES
Environmental Planning and Research

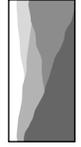
Figure III-10
Outfitters' Cabin

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8065 S.F. +/-

Source: Scheurer Architects, 2006.



CHRISTOPHER A. JOSEPH & ASSOCIATES
Environmental Planning and Research

Figure III-11
Resident's Club

Infrastructure

Roadways

The existing major public roads that serve the Project site are Old Mammoth Road, Minaret Road and Sherwin Creek Road. Primary access to the Project site would be provided from the Old Mammoth Road/Minaret Road intersection. The addition of a roundabout at this intersection is part of the Project. The number of internal intersections at the Project site would be limited. New internal access roads would be created throughout the Project site. All internal circulation would interface at various points with various links to the surroundings, whether it be to external trails accessing public lands to the south (Sherwin Range) or the eastern Forest Service lands. Internal roadways would be privately owned and maintained. The internal roadway system would provide access to various residential areas and non-residential land uses throughout the Project site. Trails and/or emergency access roadways would allow secondary points of access from internal streets and roadways. Roadway designs would fit the land and be sensitive to topography, vegetation and views. Safe crossings for pedestrians would be included and crosswalks would be provided to cross Old Mammoth Road at the Minaret Road roundabout (refer to Figure III-4). This subject is discussed in more detail in Section IV.M (Traffic).

Vehicular Circulation and Parking Systems

The primary point of vehicular access to the Project site would be from the Old Mammoth Road/Minaret Road roundabout. A second Project access would be located to the west of the intersection of Old Mammoth Road/Minaret Road. This access would function primarily as an emergency access. Access to the Project facilities and lodging would be from an internal roadway system as previously described above (refer to Figure III-4). Fairway Drive currently provides access to Snowcreek V through the Project site. This access point would remain unchanged, however Fairway Drive itself will be realigned as part of the Project. The Store and Interpretive Center would be accessed from two driveways off of Old Mammoth Road and the Outfitters' Cabin would be accessed from Sherwin Creek Road.

Short-term surface parking would be provided adjacent to the check-in locations and then guests would be directed to understructure parking located under the Hotel and major residential buildings. Short-term parking uses include passenger drop off and loading, service, deliveries, transit vehicles, and guest parking for residential uses. Some buildings may share check-in and parking access. Workforce residential units would be allowed surface parking for both resident and guest use. Parking for the golf course will be provided through the Hotel parking. Surface parking is also provided at the Outfitters' Cabin and the Store and Interpretive Center. Transit shelters would be located at shuttle stops. The specific design, location, and operational criteria for these transit facilities would be considered in conjunction with the pending development of a community-wide transit system. Surface parking lots would be appropriately landscaped and would connect to pedestrian/bicycle and trail systems. Where practical, the landscaping would include existing trees adjacent to and within surface parking areas.

Service

Service vehicles would be routed and managed to minimize conflicts with the Project's visitor activities and local traffic. All buildings would be serviced from internal roadways with the exception of the Store, which would have a service driveway off of Old Mammoth Road, and the Outfitters' Cabin, which would be accessed from Sherwin Creek Road. The Hotel would have designated central facilities for service delivery and waste management. Service areas would be designed to accommodate required service vehicle sizes.

Emergency Vehicle Access

Emergency vehicles would circulate through the Project area using the internal roadway system. In addition, supplemental fire lanes would be developed in conjunction with the roadway system to provide looped secondary emergency vehicle access and egress. Fire lanes, turning radii and back up space around buildings would be designed in cooperation with local officials so as to be adequate for emergency and fire equipment vehicles. Pavements would be designed to support loads created by emergency vehicle traffic. Standpipe and fire suppression systems connections would be incorporated into architectural and landscaping design elements where practical and in locations accessible to fire equipment.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation System

All aspects of the Project would be connected with a series of paths and walkways to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use or pedestrians and cyclists/bikers. Links would occur at various points to Old Mammoth Road and its walking and bicycle paths. The pedestrian and bicycle system would include interior trails and sidewalks as well as connecting trails from recreational amenities, outdoor spaces and residential areas. Also proposed are, walkways to and from residential areas, as well as trail connections would tie into the larger Town-wide recreational trail network which includes pedestrian trails, bike lanes and sidewalks that are adjacent to major roadways such as Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road (refer to Figure III-4). When possible, the major internal pedestrian corridors would be located adjacent to landscape features.

Structured or Understructured Parking

The Project would provide understructure parking facilities for the majority of the development. Surface parking for check in, tour bus, and delivery/service vehicles would also be provided. Parking structures would be designed to provide adequate width and height to accommodate most private vehicles. Considerations for height would factor the accommodation of vehicles with rooftop racks or cargo boxes. Design of the parking structures is to be consistent with the overall building design. The exterior and interior will incorporate the appropriate signage (i.e., graphic designs, as symbols, emblems, or words, used for giving directions or warning) and lighting to enable convenient way finding and safety. The exit

area would be well lit. Parking entrance location would not unduly conflict with pedestrian activity. The quantity and layout for disabled spaces shall conform to Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) parking standards.

Bus/Shuttle Shelters

The Project would include bus/shuttle shelters located to facilitate the safety, use and comfort of passengers using transit within the Project area. Shelters would be sited to provide adequate distance from adjacent roadways to allow passenger staging, loading and unloading. Shelters, when feasible, would be located on north and east sides of roadways to allow maximum solar exposure and facilitate snowmelt on surrounding paved surfaces. Hard surface areas around shelters would be adequate to serve passenger activities, be durable, and be connected to the local pedestrian trail and walkway network. Roof forms would be designed to hold snow or to shed it away from active pedestrian areas. Shelter walls and orientation would provide protection from prevailing winds to the extent possible. Signage and user information displays associated with the shelters would be consistent with Town Municipal Code Chapter 17.40 "Signs." Lighting used for shelters and adjacent areas would have shielded light sources so as not to create light spill or glare.

Snow Management

Snow management would meet or exceed Town Municipal Code requirements. Snow management would be addressed to ensure that residents and visitors are provided safe and convenient access to and from lodging and within the public use areas throughout the winter season. The adequacy of snow storage areas adjacent to driveways and parking areas would be evaluated based upon Zoning Code requirements for similar uses. Ground level snow storage areas would be identified. Landscape snow shed areas would be designated and located adjacent to the base of buildings, but not block required egress routes, and would be sized to accommodate the anticipated volumes of snow. Roof forms would be designed in coordination with pedestrian areas at the base of buildings. Snow falling from roofs would be directed to landscaped areas at the base for the buildings or to lower level flat roofs. In limited areas, snow rails or fencing, and heated gutters and downspouts may be required to prevent snow shed and ice buildup. Snow would not be permitted to shed freely into active pedestrian areas. However, minor snow depths may remain on pedestrian paved areas during heavy snow and cold periods. When snow begins to melt and creates conditions for icing of surfaces, it would be removed or treated with anti-icing agents. Snow would be removed from heavily used pedestrian paved areas, ramps and stairs. For other circulation routes and pedestrian areas, snow would be removed as soon as practical following snowfall to ensure access by emergency vehicles and easy pedestrian movement. Appropriately sized snow removal vehicles would be allowed into the pedestrian areas.

Grading and Drainage

Stormwater runoff would be retained on the golf course expansion property to the level of the 100-year storm in all areas where reclaimed water is proposed to be utilized. These retention facilities would be sand traps and/or natural and man-made depressions.

Stormwater from the residential/commercial development land requires retention of the 20-year storm. A new retention/infiltration system meeting this 20-year storm capacity would be installed just south of Old Mammoth Road and west of Sherwin Creek Road on the proposed new golf course. Stormwater conveyance systems from the development to the retention facilities would be designed for storm conditions of 100-year intensity. These conveyance systems would consist of roadside swales, storm drain inlets and pipes, as well as the existing lined swales and ponds of the existing golf course.

Off-site tributary areas are located south of the Project site. Offsite runoff would be conveyed through the site with conveyance systems designed to the level of the 100-year storm. This drainage is conveyed through the existing ponds and lined swales to the new retention basins. In periods of high runoff the basins could overflow to a vegetated swale, then to a culvert at Sherwin Creek Road, and then in an existing swale to Mammoth Creek.

Demolition

The Project includes the demolition of the Inyo National Forest Service administrative site (i.e., tack room and storage facilities) that is currently located on the eastern edge of the Project site off of Sherwin Creek Road. The relocation of this facility has been previously analyzed in the 1997 Snowcreek Golf Course Expansion Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), however the impacts associated with the demolition of the facility are analyzed in this Draft EIR. In addition, the existing temporary golf clubhouse, the Snowcreek Sales and Information building, and the 30-square foot Snowcreek sign would be removed.

Building Design

Form and Mass, and Scale

The Project would organize the form and mass of a single building in relationship to the scale of neighboring buildings and in relationship to the size and use of adjacent open space. A not-to-exceed 120-foot height is proposed for the Hotel. Residential units would range from two to three stories in height. Building mass would be varied to create variety in the character of the building elevations. This subject is discussed in more detail in Section IV.B (Aesthetics).

In general, the Project would be designed to be responsive and expressive of its alpine setting. Organized along a central curving parkway, buildings are laid out amongst landscaping and meandering water features. The parkway terminates at the Hotel with resort amenities, and public ice skating pond and a

swimming pool. The Hotel, although tall, is stepped-down at the ends to reduce apparent mass and provide a pleasing form and allow views to beyond.

The housing building forms are set back, stepped, and have traditional sloping roofs. The relation between buildings aims to allow openness to views, light and air. Each building density type: Low, Medium, and High, are appropriately scaled and massed to connect with trails, landscape and water features between buildings (refer to Figure III-7 through Figure III-9). Medium and High density housing are built over understructure parking.

The Project's massing, form and scale are aimed to be complementary to the natural setting. The minimal surface parking, the setbacks, the relations between buildings, the landscaping, and the building forms aim to reinforce a pedestrian scaled complex with visually pleasing buildings.

Landscape Design and Planting

The landscaping plans would reflect a natural "native" feel, utilizing various types of pines, spruce and aspen, natural ground cover and minimal use of lawn area. Water elements, such as ponds and interconnecting streams would meander throughout the Project site. The landscaping would complement the architecture in type and massing. Landscape site work would be consistent with traditional approaches for the region, and would address current needs, Town Municipal Code, regulations and environmental considerations, and designed to enhance user experience, safety, and enjoyment. The Project would use native plants that are indigenous to the Mammoth Lakes region. Landscaping shall conform to the Town's adopted water-efficient landscape regulations.

Lighting

All site and building lighting would be installed in conformance with the Town's outdoor lighting ordinance.⁶ Excessive illumination would be avoided and lighting would be designed and placed that minimizes glare and reflection and to maintain 'dark skies.'

Signage

Signage is the term used to describe the graphic designs, as symbols, emblems, or words, used for giving directions or warning. The Project's signage would be kept to a minimum. The Project would provide signage that is clear, understandable and attractive to both the vehicular and pedestrian viewer. The signage would reflect the mountain retreat community character of the Project with regard to materials, form and use. Signage would inform and direct, but in a manner and style which creates a memorable impression and would show a connection to nature, architecture and the historic past. It would link

⁶ Town of Mammoth Lakes, Municipal Code, Chapter 17.34, Outdoor Lighting Code.

together the entire resort, clubs and residential components, and cultivate an inclusive relationship throughout the Project site.

Phasing & Schedule

The Project has been organized so that it could be developed in several phases, with the golf course expansion and Hotel construction potentially occurring in the first phases and various residential components being progressively constructed at a pace dictated by market conditions. Each phase would operate successfully as a complete entity so that the Project is attractive and inviting throughout the entire development. All staging would occur within the Project boundaries. Most construction phases would last approximately 18 to 24 months but some may be as long as 24 to 30 months. Some phases may be under construction simultaneously. Construction activities are proposed to be complete in 2017.

C. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Project is to update the 1981 Master Plan, to complement the changes in the Town since 1981, and to complete the Mammoth Lakes experience by fulfilling the vision for a destination resort within the resort Town. This Project was designed to update the objectives of the 1981 Master Plan. The objectives of the Project are:

- To complete the Mammoth Lakes resort experience with a destination resort and residential units in a natural rustic setting that will attract longer year round stays with higher per visitor spending.
- Coordinate all planning criteria with regard to density, land use, open space and environmental protection with the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan, Snowcreek Master Plan 2007 and Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Code.
- Avoid environmentally sensitive sites and maintain the basic integrity of natural site features.
- Preserve existing tree cover, meadow areas, creeks and other natural site features by incorporating them into the design of land use areas.
- Minimize environmental impacts by carefully siting each building cluster, developing architecture which fits site characteristics, establishing a re-vegetation plan and using innovative construction techniques.
- Create a landmark hotel property providing an icon for Mammoth similar to the Banff Springs Hotel in Alberta, Canada or the Ritz Carlton, Bachelor Gulch Hotel in Beaver Creek, Colorado for the Town by providing a luxury destination rustic resort hotel and neighborhood offering the characteristics of the best North American and European ski resorts.

- Provide year round access to the Sherwin Range with an Outfitters' Cabin for hiking and biking in the spring, summer, and fall as well as access to the Sherwin Bowl for hike-in downhill skiing as well as snow shoeing and cross country skiing in the winter.
- Phase the development to reflect market demand and to follow the existing growth patterns of Mammoth Lakes.
- Improve road circulation patterns leading to and through the development including a roundabout.
- Provide diverse recreational amenities to promote year-round use including the completion of the golf course from a nine-hole to an 18-hole course, as well as amenities such as a golf clubhouse, an Interpretive Center, and the addition of an Outfitters' Cabin that will serve as a portal to the Sherwin Range and U.S. Forest Service lands for hiking, hike-in skiing and other outdoor activities.
- Blend the building types and densities with surrounding residential developments to provide orderly visual and land use transitions.
- Protect, preserve and/or improve the irrigation and the natural state of the existing Mammoth Creek system.
- With the Hotel as the backdrop setting, nestle the residential units in a manner to best utilize the land, maximize views and orientation to open space and recreation, creating an intimate neighborhood.
- Create focal points and view corridors, with a variety of visual experiences.
- Encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment by providing transportation with Hotel and Home Owners Association (HOA) shuttle service along with connections and stops for the Town and community mass transit.
- Encourage pedestrian circulation by providing a convenient network of plaza spaces and walks, along with paths and trails providing connectivity to the community.
- Provide adequate parking areas for residents and guests; areas which are designed as an integral element of the plan.
- Create architectural expressions complementing the Sherwin rustic mountain setting and the iconic resort hotel buildings by emphasizing roof lines, building massing, and fitting the varying topographic conditions for the residential units.

The objectives of the 1981 Master Plan, which are the same as the objectives as the 1974 Master Plan, are as follows:

- Coordinate all planning criteria with regard to density, land use, open space and environmental protection with the Mono Plan, local master plan and community desires.⁷
- Provide a variety of housing types to meet the varying needs of socio-economic groups and lifestyle patterns. Include permanent residences, condominium and rental units and overnight facilities.
- Avoid environmentally sensitive sites areas and maintain the basic integrity of natural site features.
- Preserve existing tree cover, meadow areas, creeks and other natural site features by incorporating them into the design of land use areas.
- Minimize environmental impacts by carefully siting each building cluster, developing, architecture which fits site characteristics, establishing a revegetation plan and using innovative construction techniques.
- Create a new Mammoth Lakes community image by providing a uniquely designed commercial/hotel area that offers the characteristics of European ski resorts.
- Provide for a new ski base facility to serve the future Sherwin Bowl development.
- Phase the development to reflect market demand and to follow the existing growth patterns of Mammoth Lakes.
- Improve road circulation patterns leading to and through the development.
- Provide diverse recreational amenities to promote year-round use.
- Blend the building types and densities with surrounding residential developments to provide to provide orderly visual and land use transitions.
- Protect, preserve and/or improve the irrigation and the natural state of the existing Mammoth Creek system.
- Establish small living villages by clustering units to best utilize buildable land, maximize views and orientation to open space/recreational amenities, and to create neighborhoods of a smaller and more intimate scale within which individuals can comfortably relate.

⁷ *The Mono Plan refers to the 1975 Master Plan for Mammoth Lakes. Today, this would be replaced with the Town's General Plan.*

- Create community focal points, view corridors, and a variety of visual experiences throughout the Project.
- Discourage automobile traffic and encourage pedestrian circulation by providing a convenient network of walks, paths and plaza spaces.
- Provide adequate parking areas for residents and guests; areas which are designed as an integral element of the plan.
- Create visual identity within each village cluster by developing diverse architectural concepts which relate aesthetically to existing land forms, make use of natural colors and materials consistent with the climate and setting.
- Develop low profile architectural expressions which emphasize roof line, building massing and fit varying topographic conditions.
- An objective in creating a year-round resort is to help reduce the peaks and troughs in the Mammoth Lakes economy that in the past, have tied to the highly seasonal pattern of visitation.

D. DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS

The Town is the Lead Agency for purposes of complying with CEQA and is the primary public agency responsible for approving projects on these properties. However, this Draft EIR may be used by various governmental decision-makers for discretionary permits and actions that are necessary or may be requested in connection with the Project, as well as any other discretionary permits and actions that may be identified during the environmental review and entitlement process. The primary discretionary action necessary for the Project is approval of the Snowcreek VIII, Snowcreek Master Plan Update – 2007 (2007 Master Plan).

The following approval actions will be done concurrently with approval of the overall 2007 Master Plan:

- General Plan Amendment to remove the Sherwin Ski Bowl from the Snowcreek Master Plan (this only applies to the 1987 General Plan)
- Zoning Code Amendment for 1) building height for Hotel and 2) transfer of un-used density within the master plan area.
- Development Agreement

The following approval actions will be done post the approval of the Master Plan:

- Conditional Use Permits
- Design Review

- Vesting Tentative Tract Maps
- Building Permits
- Grading Permits
- Any other necessary discretionary or ministerial permits and approvals required for the construction or operation of the Project

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