

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.1 AESTHETICS

This section addresses the potential for aesthetic impacts that could result from the increase in intensity that could occur in the commercial districts as a result of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments relative to FAR, and the changes that could result from the Mobility Element Update, particularly along Main Street. The analysis in this section is based on site surveys conducted in February 2014, June 2015 and August 2015. Amendments of General Plan People At One Time (PAOT) policies to Project Impact Evaluation Criteria (PIEC), and removing Community Benefits Incentive Zoning (CBIZ) and modifying Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) policies supported by the Land Use Element would not affect the visual character of potential development in the Town of Mammoth Lakes and as such are not included in the analysis.

More specifically, this section evaluates potential impacts on visual character, scenic views and vistas, light and glare, and shade/shadow. Visual quality refers to the overall aesthetic character of an area or a field of view. Aesthetic features often consist of unique or prominent natural or man-made attributes or several small features that, when viewed together, create a whole that is visually interesting or appealing. The evaluation of visual quality pertains to the degree and nature of contrast between the Project and its surroundings. The analysis of views focuses on the effects that the Project could have on existing views of scenic vistas or valued publicly available views of aesthetic resources such as views of Mammoth Mountain.

Artificial light impacts are typically associated with light that occurs during the evening and nighttime hours, and may include streetlights, illuminated signage, vehicle headlights, and other point sources. Uses such as residences are considered light sensitive since they are typically occupied by persons who have an expectation of privacy during evening hours and who are subject to disturbance by bright light sources. The analysis of lighting impacts focuses on whether the Project would cause or substantially increase lighting effects on light sensitive uses.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light from highly polished surfaces, such as window glass or reflective materials, and to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by artificial light directed toward a light sensitive land use. The analysis of glare focuses on whether glare effects would interfere with glare sensitive activities.

Shading from buildings and structures has the potential to block sunlight. Although shading is common and expected in developed areas, and is considered a beneficial feature when it provides cover from excess sunlight and heat, it can have an adverse impact if it interferes with desired melting of snow/ice or sun-related activities for sensitive uses. Shade/shadow is evaluated because of changes that would result along Main Street as a part of the implementation of the Mobility Element Update.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

a. Regulatory Framework

(1) State of California

(a) State Scenic Highway Regulations

California's official Scenic Highway designation was created by the Legislature in 1963 for the purpose of preserving and protecting scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic values of land adjacent to highways. Under Section 260 of the California Streets and Highway Code, the intent of the program is to protect and enhance California's natural beauty and to protect the social and economic values provided by the state's scenic resources. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which a potential change affects the traveler's enjoyment of the view. A scenic corridor is the land generally adjacent to and visible from the highway and is identified using a motorist's line of vision. A reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon.

United States Highway 395 (US-395), between Benton Crossing Road and the intersection with State Route 203 (SR 203) is designated by the State of California as a scenic highway. SR 203 is not a designated scenic highway. The Project Area for the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments encompasses Main Street (SR 203) extending from the Town's boundary on the east to an area just east of Minaret Road and along Old Mammoth Road from SR 203 to just south of Chateau Road. This area does not include a scenic highway. The Draft Mobility Element includes areas which extend beyond the Town's Municipal Boundary to include surrounding areas which includes the portion of US 395 which is designated as a scenic highway.

(2) Town of Mammoth Lakes

(a) General Plan

The Mobility Element Update covers the area encompassed by the General Plan while the Project Area for the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments focus on the downtown, commercially designated area along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road. Visual resources within the Town of Mammoth Lakes are addressed in the Community Vision, the Community Design Element, and the Neighborhood and District Character Elements of the General Plan. The Resource Management and Conservation Element also includes goals and policies to protect the Town's natural resources, which in turn serve to preserve aesthetic resources (i.e., trees and native vegetation).

The General Plan addresses the Town's dramatic setting as one of the major attractions to residents and visitors. In order to achieve the Community Vision the Town places a high value on maintaining exceptional standards for design and development that complement and are appropriate to the Eastern Sierra Nevada mountain setting and their sense of a "village in the trees" with small town charm.

The intent of the Neighborhood and District Character Element is to enhance the unique character of Mammoth Lakes through the careful development of individual sites and districts. The General Plan identifies twelve districts including the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road districts, which warrant special study, and four mountain portals and provides for specialized goals, policies and land use direction for each district and mountain portal with focused attention on land use, community design and economic development. Design guidelines and policies for these districts aim to encourage pedestrian activity and

opportunities for interaction within a mix of retail, office, commercial, and residential uses. Policies intend that new development be designed to be attractive with a high level of detail resulting in a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Commercial corridors such as Main Street and Old Mammoth Road should be walkable year-round, vibrant, colorful, and accessible and the overall streetscape should include various pedestrian amenities such as street furniture, trees, flowers and planters, interesting sidewalk surfaces and public art.

The policies in the General Plan support the retention of major landscape characteristics and unique natural features such as large trees, Mammoth Mountain, Mammoth Rock, Crystal Crag, the Bluffs, the Sherwin Range, Long Valley, Mammoth Knolls, and Mammoth Crest. Major view corridors and vistas toward these important landscape features are identified in the General Plan, and are shown in **Figure 4.1-1, General Plan Major View Corridors and Vistas** and **Figure 4.1-2, General Plan Vistas and Landmarks**.

(b) Mobility Element (Adopted)

In general, the focus of the adopted Mobility Element is on the transportation system within the Town's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), although connectivity to areas outside of the UGB, including adjacent public lands and other regional transportation systems are considered, including air service. The adopted Mobility Element describes how the Town would achieve a progressive and integrated multi-modal transportation system, one that serves the various needs of residents, employees and visitors. The following goals and policies contained within the Mobility Element relate to aesthetics:

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

- **Policy M.8.A:** Encourage traffic-calming techniques that protect residential neighborhoods and streets, enhance public safety, maintain small town character and enhance resort design objectives.
- **Policy M.9.A:** Require snow management methods that minimize environmental damage while optimizing road and pedestrian safety.
- **Policy M.9.C:** Support development of geothermal and solar heating opportunities for snow removal.

(c) Main Street Plan

The Downtown Concept for Main Street (DCMS), accepted by the Town Council in September 2010, provides the primary policy foundation for the Main Street Plan. The Town Council accepted the Main Street Plan on February 19, 2014, which includes 1.5 miles of Main Street through downtown Mammoth Lakes near Minaret Road to the west and near the Mammoth Mountain RV to the east. The Main Street Plan establishes a future vision to transform Main Street into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented center, serving residents and visitors through the creation of a 'grand avenue,' with parallel parking; new pedestrian and bicycle lanes; a landscaped median; and businesses moved up to the street, eliminating existing frontage roads to create new development opportunities. **Figure 4-1-3, Main Street Plan Conceptual Cross Section** illustrates the conceptual improvements along Main Street.

Major concepts within the Main Street Plan include:

- A multi-modal Main Street that is easily phased
- A positive and memorable image through improved gateways, streetscapes and landscapes
- Improved connectivity throughout Downtown
- A mixed-use Downtown with defined character areas
- New parks and open space
- Celebrated civic destinations
- Improved parking concepts

(d) Trail System Master Plan

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

Guiding Principles

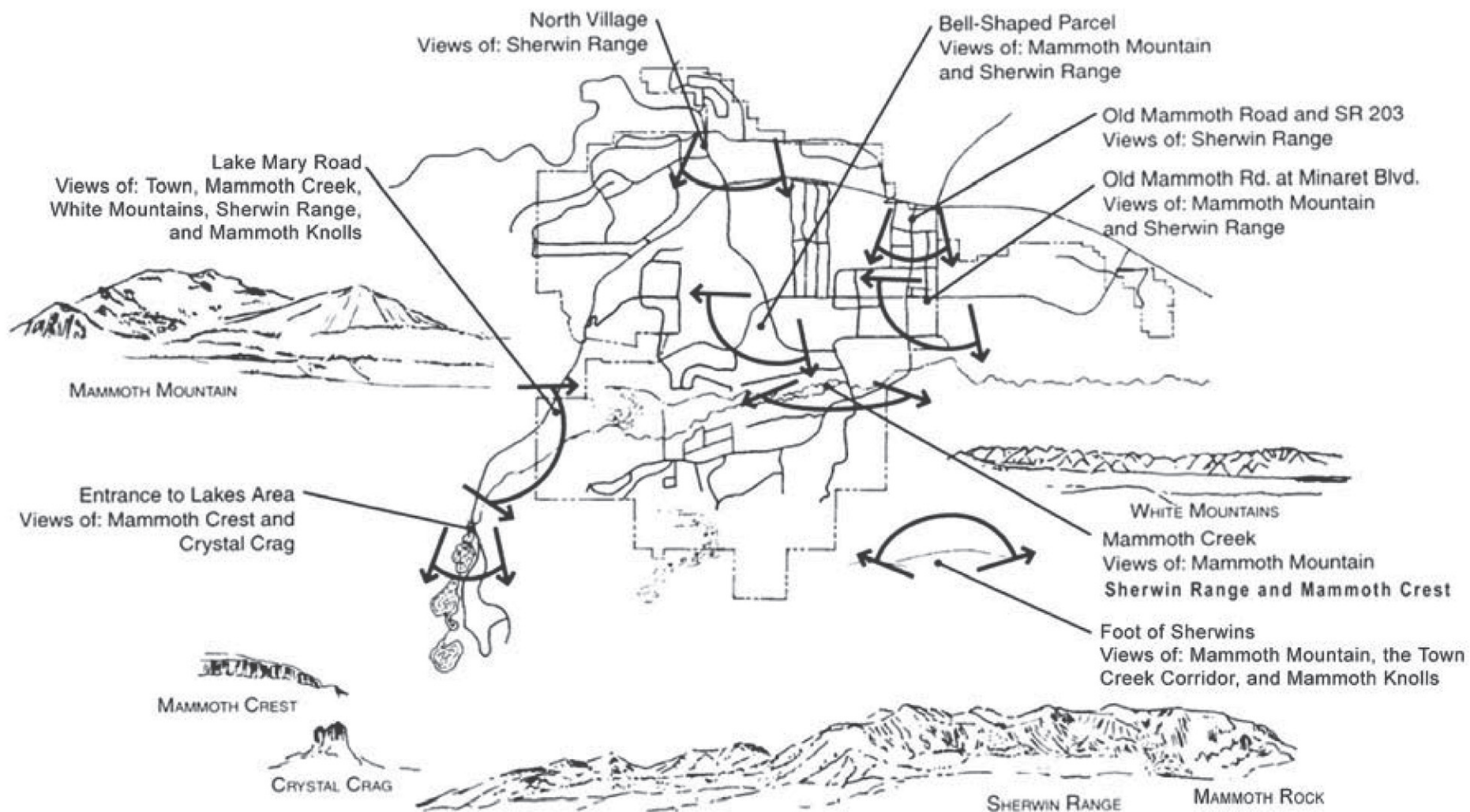
- The trails network must be developed in a way that maintains or enhances the small-town character of Mammoth Lakes.
- Providing access to the natural environment will be balanced with a respect for the natural environment. Sustainable design principles will guide the development of all recommended projects.

TSMP Recommendations

- Recommendation MUP5: Lighting on Multi-Use Paths: Lighting should be considered for segments of multi-use paths that are not currently illuminated by adjacent street lighting. Due to the cost of installing and maintaining lighting, segments would be prioritized based on their potential demand for nighttime use.
- Recommendation B2: Bike Lanes on Major Streets (Arterials) includes painting, stenciling, and striping.
- Recommendation BP2: Bicycle Parking Designed by Local Artists.

(e) Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines, 2005

The Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines provides recommendations to be used in the Town's design review process. They are intended to promote high-quality and thoughtful site and building design; visually



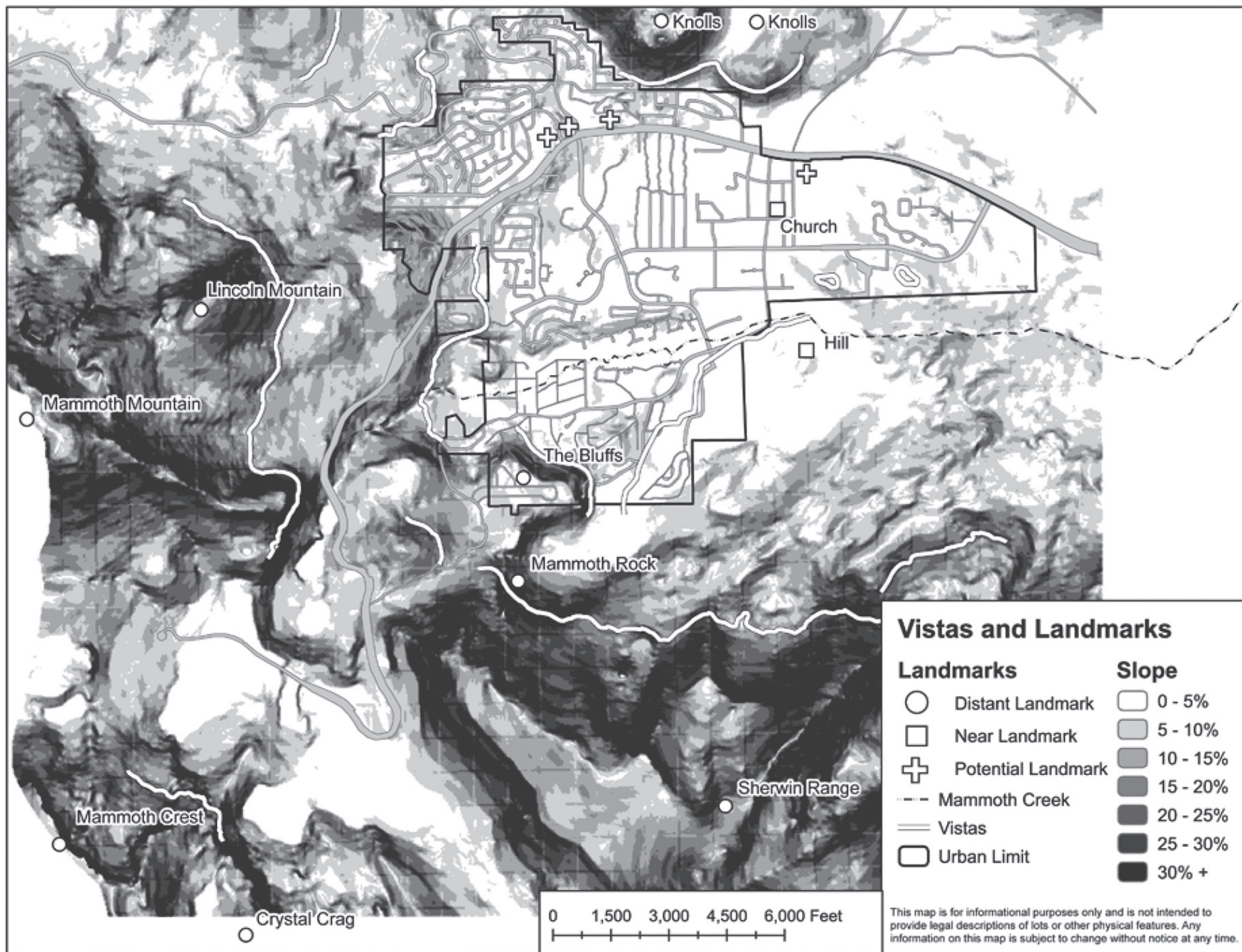
General Plan Major View Corridors and Vistas

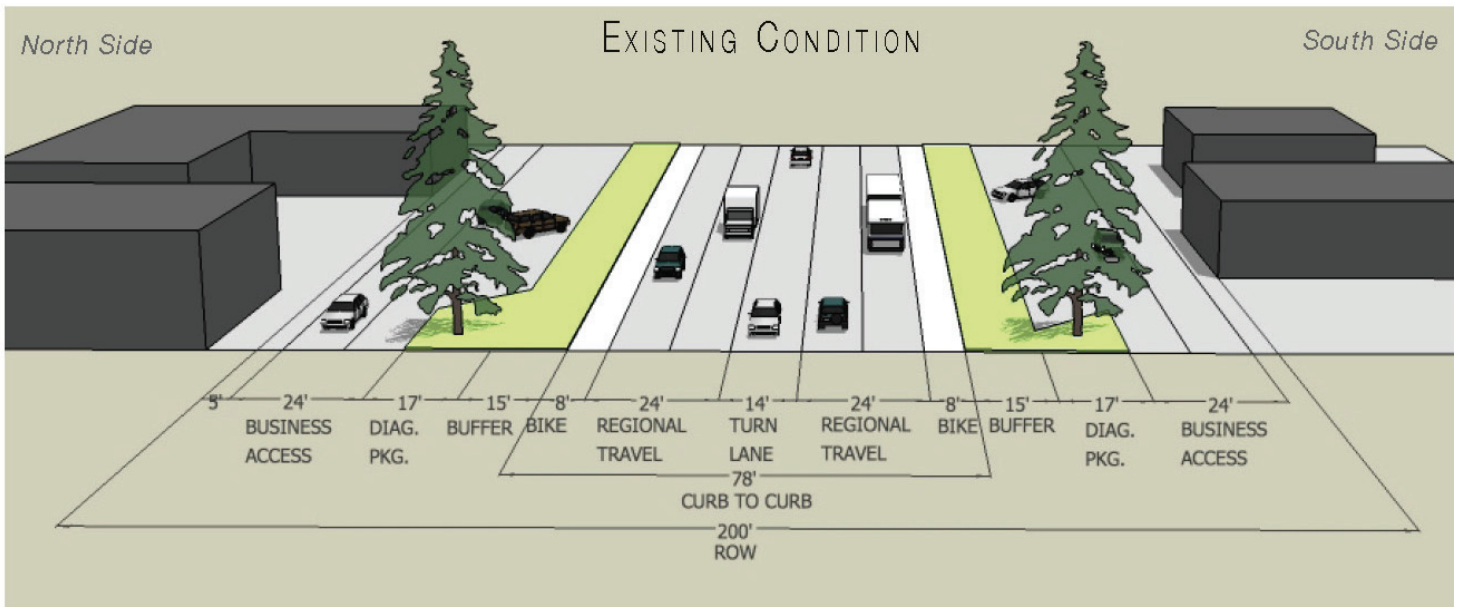
Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendment and Mobility Element Update

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan, 2007.

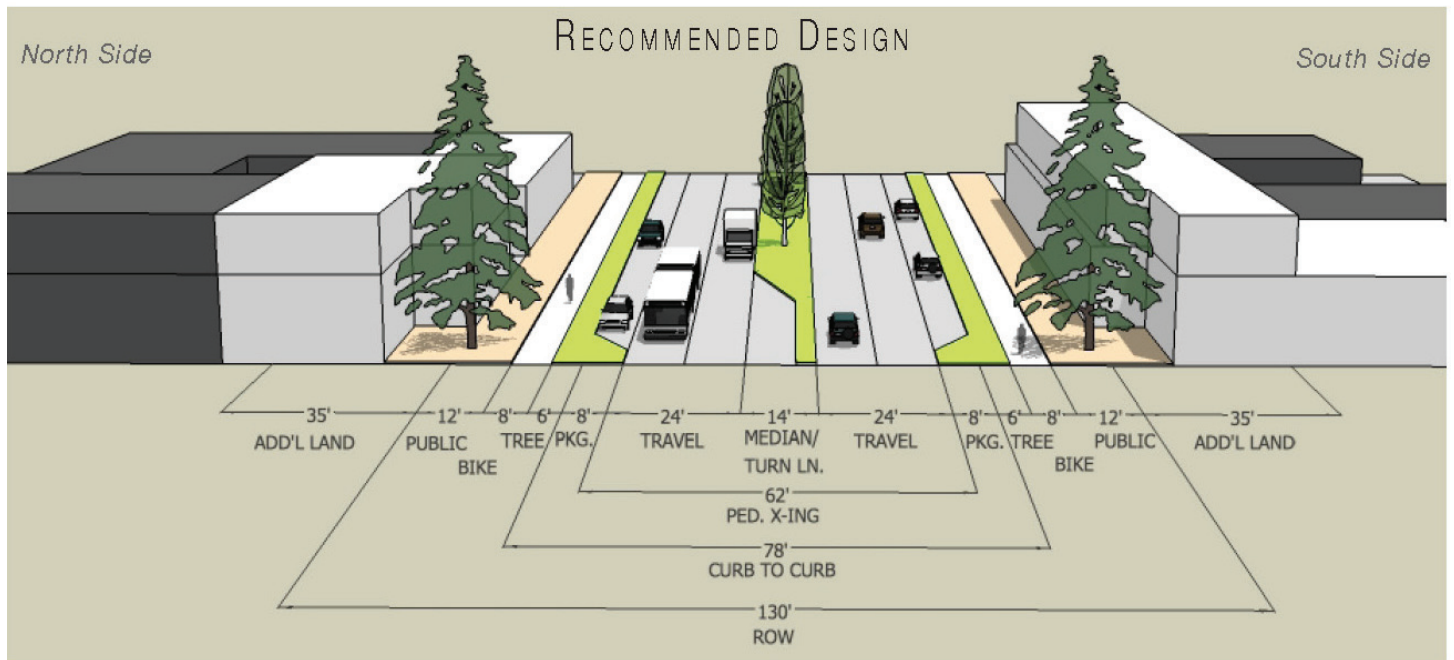
FIGURE

4.1-1





New buildings
 Existing buildings



This page intentionally blank.

interesting, appropriate, well-crafted and maintained buildings and landscaping; the use of durable high-quality, and natural materials that reflect Mammoth Lakes' character and mountain setting; and attention to the design and execution of building details and amenities in both public and private projects. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines apply to all commercial and residential development, except single-family residences. The Design Principles for Community Values (Section 1.2) aim to preserve and enhance the Town's small town image, while reflecting its unique natural setting and environment; encourage compatible design; maintain important views and vistas; provide functional and attractive pedestrian and bike circulation connections; and encourage the use of environmentally sensitive design.

(f) Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code

Section 17.36.030, Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, of the Town Municipal Code sets forth rules and regulations for outdoor lighting within the Town. The purpose of Section 17.36.030 is to accomplish the following:

- To promote a safe, glare-free, and pleasant nighttime environment for residents and visitors;
- To protect and improve safe travel for all modes of transportation;
- To prevent nuisances caused by unnecessary light intensity, glare, and light trespass;
- To protect the ability to view the night sky by restricting unnecessary upward projection of light;
- To phase out existing non-conforming fixtures that violate this section, including those owned by the town and other public agencies; and
- To promote lighting practices and systems that conserve energy.

Section 17.36.030 of the Town Municipal Code also requires that an Outdoor Lighting Plan be submitted in conjunction with various applications including design review, conditional use permit, subdivision, or a building permit for a new structure or addition(s) of 25 percent or more in terms of gross floor area, seating capacity, or parking spaces (either with a single addition or cumulative additions). An Outdoor Lighting Plan is required for all new outdoor lighting installations on commercial (including four or more units of multi-family residences), industrial, public and institutional properties.

b. Existing Conditions

(1) Visual Characteristics of Mammoth Lakes

Figure 4.1-4, *Photograph Location Map*, identifies the location of various photographs showing the visual character of the Project Area for the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments within the Main Street and Old Mammoth Road area. As shown in in **Figure 4.1-5** through **Figure 4.1-7, *Area Photos***, the Town is an alpine resort community situated in a dramatic mountain valley surrounded by majestic peaks. Specifically, the Town is located within the Mammoth Lakes Basin at the eastern foothills of Mammoth Mountain which is located within the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. Surrounding topography includes Mammoth Knolls to the north, the Long Valley to the east (with views to the Inyo National Forest to the far east), the White Mountains to the southeast, the Sherwin Mountain Range to the south, Mammoth Crest to the southwest, and Mammoth Mountain to the west. The surrounding forest weaves through the Town creating a unique, forested, rustic environment. The forests, mountains, and meadows in and around the Town primarily define its character. Native vegetation includes pine forest and meadow. Barren rock outcrops and talus slopes, and chaparral and sagebrush all add texture and color. Against the backdrop of the area's dramatic

natural landscapes, urban development in the Town provides a visual contrast. Roads, buildings, utility poles, and other man-made structures provide forms, textures, and colors that contrast with the natural environment. In addition, there is currently a network of trail facilities throughout the Town. The visual environment within the Project Area, specifically along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road, which contain the majority of the Town's commercial development are discussed in detail below.

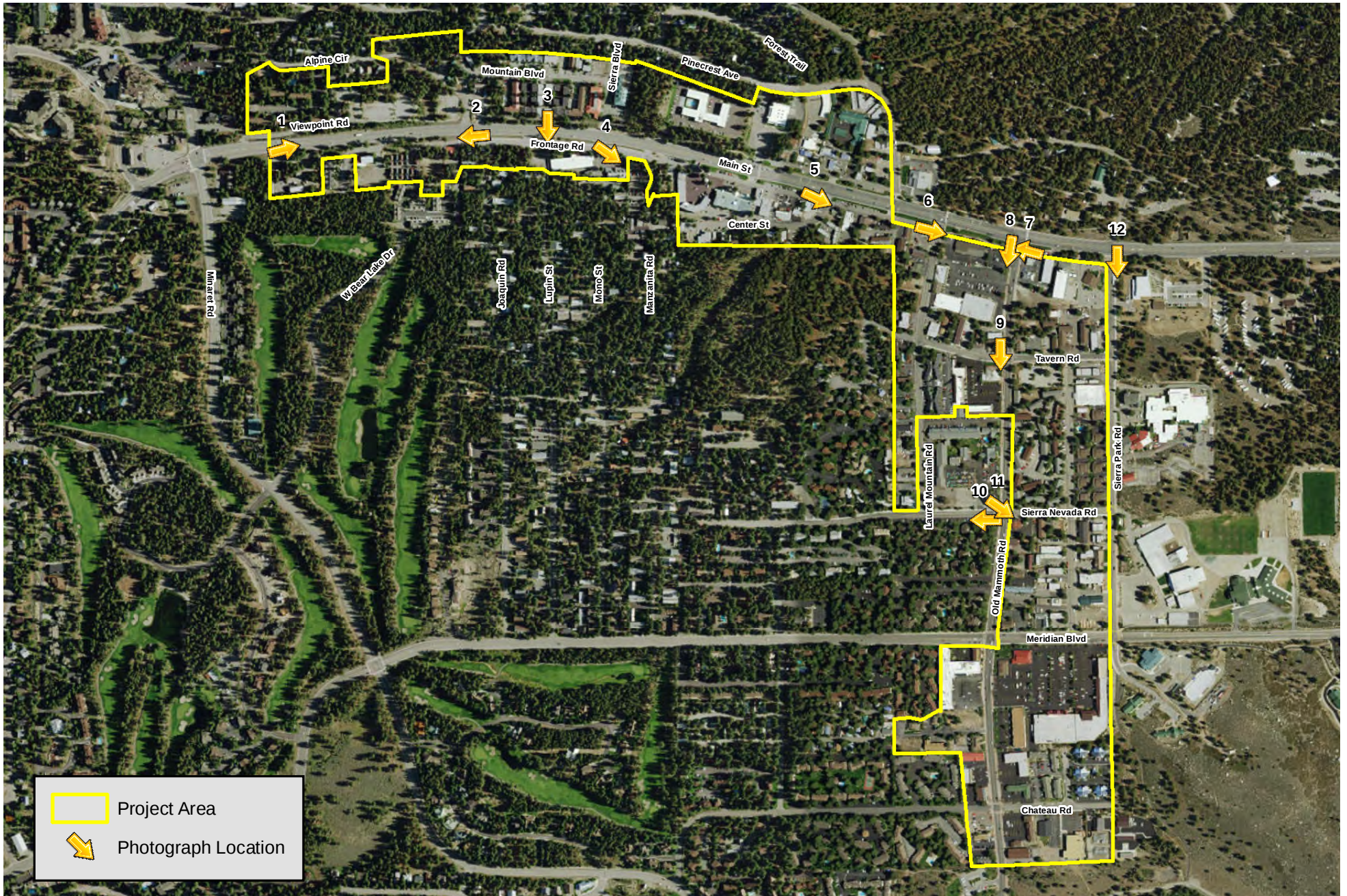
Main Street

Main Street, or SR 203, serves as the main corridor for residents and visitors arriving to Mammoth Lakes, and the route to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA). It also serves as the main commercial corridor in the Town. Main Street ascends in elevation from east to west. Significant grade changes are found from north to south at the west end of Main Street, while the east portion is relatively flat. The majority of Main Street from the eastern entry of town to Minaret Road has a 200-foot right-of-way (ROW), although it narrows in some locations to as little as 120 feet. The street itself includes four lanes of through traffic (two lanes in each direction) and a designated center left turn lane that ends west of Manzanita Road. A shoulder runs the entire length of the corridor on either side of the street adjacent to the curb and serves as a bike lane. Discontinuous two way frontage roads parallel Main Street along much of its south side and parts of the north side. Angled parking is available along the majority of the southern frontage road and portions of the northern frontage road.

Main Street includes a mixture of architectural styles including alpine-inspired pitched roofs and A-frame style buildings, as well as more non-descript strip-commercial developments, standalone single-use commercial and office uses, motels and some residential uses. While many properties along Main Street have limited trees, the sense of a forest can be seen in the tree-covered hillsides and neighborhoods north of Main Street, and the backdrop of tree-tops rising behind buildings and rooflines. The trees contribute to a sense of place and create a wooded character to the area. In terms of the visual character of the built environment, Main Street does not present a particularly cohesive appearance. The overall characteristic is of low rise, one to three story buildings or small and medium complexes, set back from the street and separated from the street by surface parking lots and the frontage roads.

The north of Main Street is dominated by lodging uses, service stations, and commercial uses as well as public facilities such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes Post Office and the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Fire Station. The north side of Main Street near Old Mammoth Road is under Forest Service jurisdiction and is developed as a recreational campground and programmatic support areas. The south side of Main Street is more intensely developed and is predominately developed with restaurants and retail uses with angled parking along the frontage road.

Transit stops and some pedestrian improvements, primarily consisting of sections of pedestrian paths, landscaping and other amenities have been implemented over time. A small circular pedestrian promenade located at the corner of Main Street and Old Mammoth Road includes decorative paving, trees and landscaping. The promenade extends into a curving pedestrian pathway with landscaping along the southeastern portion of Main Street. However the pedestrian path is incomplete along the south side of Main Street and often does not align with the frontages of the retail establishments. Pedestrian pathways do not exist along the west end of Main Street.



0 800 1,600 Feet

Photograph Location Map

Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendment and Mobility Element Update
Source: USDA FSA (Aerial), 2014; PCR Services Corporation, 2015.

FIGURE

4.1-4



Photograph 1: Main Street looking east near Minaret Road.



Photograph 2: Main Street looking west near Mountain Boulevard.



Photograph 3: Main Street and Lupin Street looking south.



Photograph 4: Frontage Road and Mono Street looking east.



Photograph 5: Commercial development near Main Street and Center Street looking southeast.



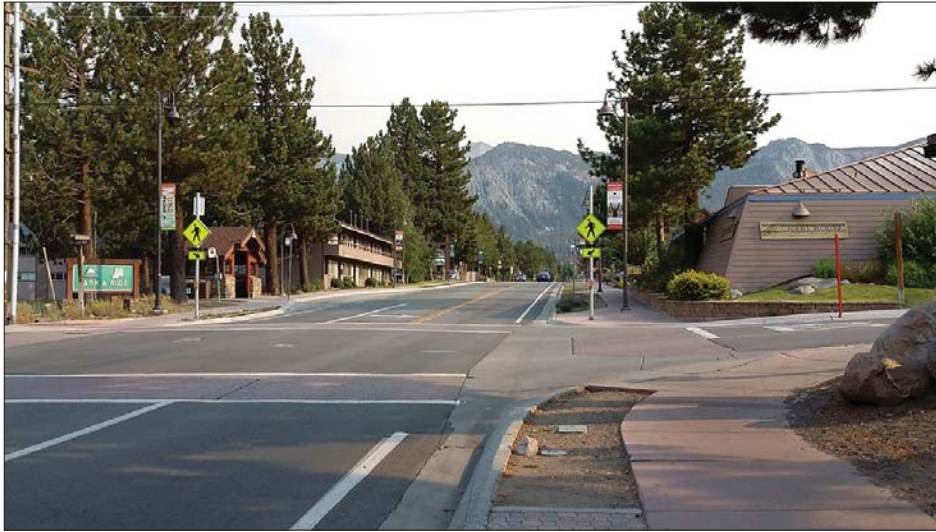
Photograph 6: View of pedestrian improvements on the south side of Main Street near Old Mammoth Road.



Photograph 7: Main Street facing west near Old Mammoth Road.



Photograph 8: Old Mammoth Road facing South near Main Street.



Photograph 9: Old Mammoth Road near Tavern Road looking south.



Photograph 10: Sierra Nevada Road and Old Mammoth Road looking west.



Photograph 11: Sierra Nevada Road and Old Mammoth Road looking southeast.



Photograph 12: Sierra Park Road looking south.

In terms of scenic views, the most notable views from Main Street are of the natural topography of Mammoth Mountain to the west and the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock to the south. The views from the public right-of-way are highly prized and help to define the Town's rustic character. Due to the size and elevation of Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock, the tops of the mountain ranges remain visible from almost all locations along Main Street. However, in many instances, intervening buildings, trees and during winter conditions, high drifts of snow can obstruct full, expansive views of these mountains from mid-block areas along Main Street. As shown in Photograph 3, 9 and 12 in Figures 4.1-5 and 4.1-5, *Site Photographs*, the most panoramic views of Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock are generally visible from Main Street near north/south corridors such as Lupin Street, Joaquin Road, Sierra Park Road, and Old Mammoth Road. Views of Mammoth Mountain to the west are available from most locations along Main Street.

Old Mammoth Road

Old Mammoth Road is a primary, commercial corridor in Mammoth Lakes. The three-lane arterial (two lanes plus a center turn lane), extends to the south from its intersection with Main Street, with sidewalks along most of its length through the commercial district.

Compared to Main Street, Old Mammoth Road has a more pedestrian-oriented environment, with a narrower street width, continuous sidewalks and with more buildings located closer to the street edge. The majority of residential buildings are two stories in height. Old Mammoth Road is largely developed with commercial uses such as freestanding retail and restaurant buildings interspersed with residential, lodging, and mixed-use developments. Two large shopping centers Minaret Village Mall and Sierra Center Mall are located at the intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Meridian Boulevard. Most of the lots are developed, with a limited number of trees along property boundaries. The majority of parking is provided in surface lots, oriented to the side or rear of commercial buildings. Sidewalks are available along both sides of Old Mammoth Road in the downtown area.

Expansive views of Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock to the south and the Knolls to the north exist due to the north/south orientation of the road.

Winter Conditions and Snow Management

Because of the substantial snow fall that occurs during most winter months, visual conditions along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road can differ quite substantially between winter and summer. Snow must be removed and stored to keep roadways clear, and ice tends to build up, particularly on the north sides of buildings that receive limited sun exposure, creating potential safety hazards. When snow is piled up, it can block views of one story commercial/lodging uses, landscaping, and pedestrian paths.

While Old Mammoth Road has a snow removal management district for the streets and rights-of-way, Main Street lacks comprehensive snow management, which is currently performed by different entities in a number of ways. Caltrans, who owns and operates SR 203, clears snow from the highway and blows it onto the landscape buffer. Caltrans typically keeps a low level ice cap on Main Street to reduce the impact of vehicle chains on the roadway. The Town clears snow from the frontage roads and regularly removes ice as part of regular snow removal. If an icing condition is found it is remedied with cinders to provide traction and aid in melting the ice. The Town places the snow into the landscape buffer, which can create a

substantial snow berm that blocks the visibility of businesses.¹ To help solve the visibility problem, some business owners along Main Street contract with a third party to remove some of the snow berm in front of their business. The Town completed a Parking and Snow Management District Feasibility Study in June 2014, which evaluates ways to address funding for parking and snow management throughout the Main Street area and the rest of the Town. One of the recommendations of the Parking Snow Management Feasibility Study is to create a Property-Based Improvement District (PBID) to fund the management of a coordinated snow removal program of public and private properties along Main Street as well as potentially other areas of Downtown or the Village.

(2) Light and Glare

There are primarily two sources of light intrusion within developed areas within the Town: 1) light emanating from structural interiors and passing through windows; and 2) light from exterior sources, such as street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, event lighting in the resort areas, vehicle headlights, slope grooming, and landscape lighting. Uses such as residences, hospitals, and hotels are considered light sensitive since they are typically occupied by persons who have expectations for privacy during evening hours and who are subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Glare results mainly from sunlight reflection off flat building surfaces with glass and reflective metal surfaces typically contributing to the highest degree of reflectivity. At night, lights from the Town illuminate the developed areas, particularly roadways providing contrast with the generally uninterrupted darkness of the surrounding mountains and forested lands.

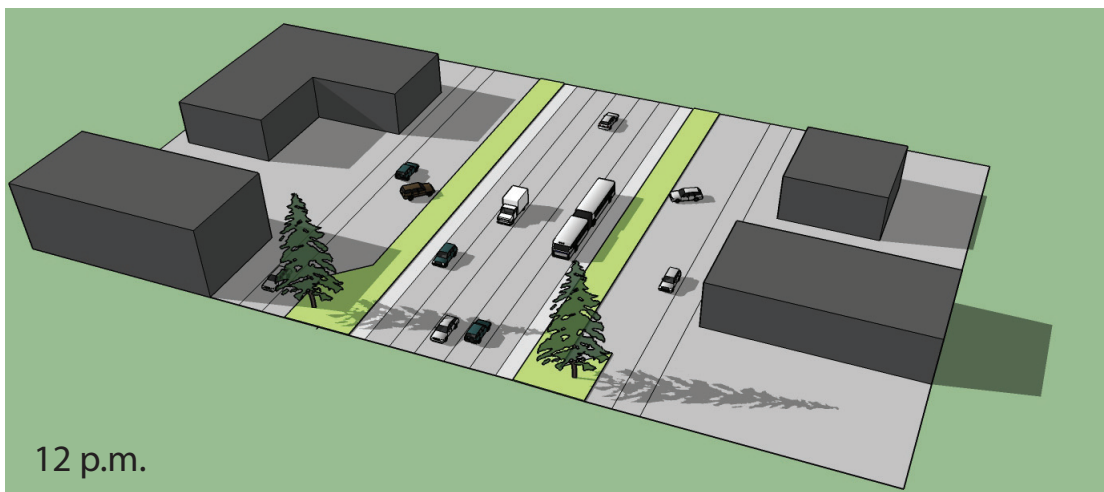
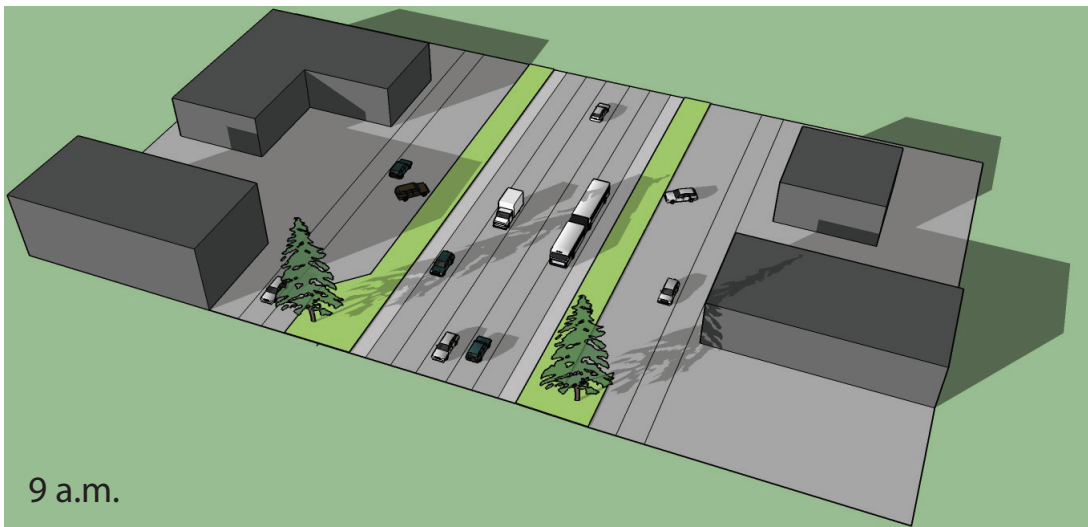
Preservation of dark night skies through appropriate lighting controls has been identified as an important community goal. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources, such as automobile headlights. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the year. Glare-sensitive uses generally include residences and transportation corridors (i.e., roadways).

(3) Shade/Shadow

The consequences of shadows on land uses can be positive, including cooling effects during warm weather, or negative, such as loss of warmth during cooler weather and loss of natural light. Shadow effects are dependent on several factors, including local topography, the height and bulk of a project's structural elements, sensitivity of surrounding uses, season, and duration of shadow projection. The users or occupants of certain land uses, such as residential, recreational, churches, schools, outdoor restaurants, and pedestrian areas have expectations for direct sunlight and warmth from the sun. These land uses are termed "shadow-sensitive."

Additionally, in areas subject to high amounts of snowfall, such as Mammoth Lakes, shade can prevent snow or ice from melting which can lead to slick roads and "black ice" conditions where roadway safety may become a concern. Due to its east/west configuration, Main Street is subject to shading impacts. Under existing conditions, as shown in **Figure 4.1-8, Existing Conditions - Winter Solstice Shadows (December 21)** during the winter solstice, the sun's lower elevation in the southern sky causes buildings to cast shadows in a

¹ Final Parking and Snow Management District Feasibility Study, Town Of Mammoth Lakes, accepted by the Town Council on July 2, 2014.



This page intentionally blank.

northwest, north, and northeast direction. These shadows extend on the frontage road, parking lots, and existing sidewalks within 60 feet of existing southern buildings for more than three hours. Therefore, the existing shadows create the potential for 'black ice' conditions to occur along these pedestrian and roadway areas. However, given the existing setback of the buildings from Main Street, the existing shadows do not extend on to Main Street for more than two hours under existing conditions. As described earlier, the Town regularly removes an ice as part of regular snow removal. If an icing condition is found it is remedied with cinders to provide traction and aid in melting the cap. Along Main Street, snow and ice removal is the responsibility of Caltrans, who own and maintain SR 203. Caltrans clears snow from the highway and blows it onto the landscape buffer. Caltrans typically keeps a low level ice cap on Main Street to reduce the impact of vehicle chains on the roadway.

2. METHODOLOGY AND THRESHOLDS

a. Methodology

The analysis of aesthetic impacts is based on a comparison of the policies and physical characteristics that could occur with implementation of the Project relative to existing conditions and to the significance thresholds as set forth in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. As this is a Program EIR, the aesthetic analysis focuses on the conceptual nature of projected visual changes and the broad applicability of proposed policy changes. Subsequent focused environmental review may take place as individual projects are proposed.

The evaluation of visual quality pertains to the degree and nature of contrast between the Project and its surroundings. Implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not change the development standards that establish the parameters of development or the allowed uses within the commercial districts. More specifically the amendments would not change the maximum building heights (45 to 55 feet), setbacks, articulation, or parking requirements that are set forth in the Town's Municipal Code. The change would, however, remove the cap for the number of units or rooms and development would be regulated through floor area ratio. Therefore, the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not in and of themselves affect the visual character and style of future development that would occur in the downtown area. Future buildings would have heights of four to five stories (45 to 55 feet). These heights are currently permitted under the Zoning Code and Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not change these development standards, but as existing development has not yet been fully built out as allowed by the existing parameters in the Zoning Code new development could be taller than many of the existing one to three story structures currently located along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road.

Thus, the anticipated appearance in the commercial districts is compared with the existing visual quality to determine whether the visual character of the area would be degraded. The intent of the analysis is to determine if valued view resources would be blocked or diminished.

In terms of the Mobility Element Update, the primary changes would be the addition of sidewalks and trails and the changes that would occur along Main Street with the vacation of the existing frontage road. Thus, the Main Street right-of-way would become narrower and buildings would be located closer to SR 203. The analysis of views compares the changes resulting from the changes along Main Street to the quality of existing views. In addition, shading along Main Street is evaluated given the potential for ice on the roadway resulting from shade cast on the street with the buildings being located closer to SR 203. Shading diagrams were prepared to identify the potential increase in shadow-related impacts that could occur along Main

Street as a result of implementation of the Project since future building would be located closer to the street edge along Main Street as a result of the vacation of the frontage roads compared with building location under existing conditions. A generic building was defined based on the Town of Mammoth Lakes existing development regulations for height and setbacks in the D and MLR districts. The conceptual building was located on a site on the southern frontage of Main Street using the model provided by Winter and Company as part of the Town of Mammoth Main Street Plan developed in February 2014. The winter solstice was modeled since that represents the greatest potential shadow impacts since the sun's lower elevation in the southern sky causes buildings to cast shadows in a northwest, north, and northeast direction between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. The buildings shown in the shade/shadow analysis are conceptual in nature and represent a maximum envelope that could occur.

In addition, the potential increase in intensity of development would increase the light and glare compared with existing conditions. The analysis of light and glare identifies the location of light-sensitive land uses and describes the existing ambient conditions in the area and describes the future light and glare sources to determine whether light spill onto light-sensitive uses would occur.

b. Thresholds

For purposes of this EIR, the Town utilized the checklist questions in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* as thresholds of significance to determine whether the Project would have a significant environmental impact regarding aesthetics. The Project would result in a significant impact with regard to aesthetics if the Project would:

- AES-1** Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- AES-2** Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic resources within a state scenic highway.
- AES-3** Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- AES-4** Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

In addition to the thresholds from Appendix G of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, which are used to evaluate aesthetics, views, and light and glare, the changes that would occur could result in an increase in shadows particularly during the winter months. Therefore, to address potential shade/shadow impacts, the Town considers that the project would have a significant shade/shadow impact if the project would:

- AES-5** Result in shade/shadow on shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. PST (between early November and mid-March), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. PDT (between mid-March and early November).

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

This section provides the applicable General Plan goals and policies as well as measures from the adopted Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) from the General Plan Update and the Trails System Master Plan.

(1) General Plan

The following is a list of goals and policies contained in the 2007 General Plan Update that are applicable to the Project:

Community Design

Goal C.1: Improve and enhance the community's unique character by requiring a high standard of design in all development in Mammoth Lakes.

Goal C.2: Design the man-made environment to complement, not dominate, the natural environment.

Celebrate Public Spaces

- **Policy C.2.A:** Create well-designed and significant public spaces in resort/commercial developments to accommodate pedestrians and encourage social interaction and community activity.
- **Policy C.2.C:** Encourage development of distinct districts, each with an appropriate density and a strong center of retail, services or amenities.
- **Policy C.2.D:** Preserve and enhance special qualities of districts through focused attention on land use, community design and economic development.
- **Policy C.2.E:** Ensure that each district center is an attractive destination that is comfortable and inviting with sunny streets, plazas and sidewalks.
- **Policy C.2.F:** Improve visual appearance as well as pedestrian access and activity by requiring infill development patterns. Encourage rehabilitation and reorientation of existing strip commercial development consistent with neighborhood and district character.
- **Policy C.2.G:** Ensure that development in commercial areas provides for convenient pedestrian movement between adjoining and adjacent properties.
- **Policy C.2.H:** Support transit ridership and pedestrian activity by emphasizing district parking, shared parking, mixed use and other strategies to achieve a more efficient use of land and facilities.

Celebrate the Spectacular Natural Surroundings

- **Policy C.2.J:** Be stewards in preserving public views of surrounding mountains, ridgelines and knolls.

- **Policy C.2.K:** On prominent ridgelines and bluffs, substantial additions, modifications, renovation and rehabilitation to existing development shall incorporate measures to minimize visual intrusion.

Careful Site Planning

- **Policy C.2.L:** Create a visually interesting and aesthetically pleasing built environment by requiring all development to incorporate the highest quality of architecture and thoughtful site design and planning.
- **Policy C.2.M:** Enhance community character by ensuring that all development, regardless of scale or density, maximizes provision of all types of open space, particularly scenic open space.
- **Policy C.2.N:** Plan the siting and design of buildings to preserve the maximum amount of open space, trees and natural features to be consistent with themes and district character.
- **Policy C.2.O:** Site development adjustments may be considered to preserve significant groups of trees or individual specimens. Replanting with native and compatible non-native trees to mitigate necessary tree removal is required.
- **Policy C.2.P:** Require mid-block connectors through long blocks as development and redevelopment occurs.
- **Policy C.2.Q:** Design development so that public spaces contribute to an overall sense of security and lack of vulnerability to crimes of opportunity.

Distinctive Architecture

- **Policy C.2.T:** Use natural, high quality building materials to reflect Mammoth Lakes' character and mountain setting.
- **Policy C.2.U:** Require unique, authentic and diverse design that conveys innovation and creativity and discourages architectural monotony.

Comfortable Building Height, Mass, and Scale

- **Policy C.2.V:** Building height, massing and scale shall complement neighboring land uses and preserve views to the surrounding mountains.
- **Policy C.2.W:** Maintain scenic public views and view corridors (shown in Figures 1 and 2) that visually connect community to surroundings.
- **Policy C.2.X:** Limit building height to the trees on development sites where material tree coverage exists and use top of forest canopy in general area as height limit if no trees exist on site.

Community Design and Streetscape

Goal C.3: Ensure safe and attractive public spaces, including sidewalks, trails, parks and streets.

- **Policy C.3.D:** Development shall provide pedestrian oriented facilities, outdoor seating, plazas, weather protection, transit waiting areas and other streetscape improvements.
- **Policy C.3.E:** Ensure that landscaping, signage, public art, street enhancements and building design result in a more hospitable and attractive pedestrian environment. Require an even higher level of design quality and detail in commercial mixed use areas.

Natural Environment

Goal C.4: Be stewards of natural and scenic resources essential to community image and character.

- **Policy C.4.A:** Development shall be designed to provide stewardship for significant features and natural resources of the site.
- **Policy C.4.D:** Retain the forested character of the town by requiring development to pursue aggressive replanting with native trees and other compatible species.
- **Policy C.4.E:** Limited tree thinning, and upper-story limbing may be permitted where needed to maintain public safety and the health of the forest but not for the enhancement of views.

Night Sky, Light Pollution, and Glare

Goal C.5: Eliminate glare to improve public safety. Minimize light pollution to preserve views of stars and the night sky.

- **Policy C.5.A:** Require outdoor light fixtures to be shielded and down-directed so as to minimize glare and light trespass.
- **Policy C.5.B:** Enforce removal, replacement or retrofit of non-shielded or non-down-directed light fixtures

(2) General Plan Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the Town of Mammoth General Plan includes mitigation measures applicable to aesthetics. Since these are adopted measures, for purposes of this EIR these measures are applied where applicable to address the impacts of the Project. The following mitigation measures are from the Town's adopted General Plan MMRP:

GPMM.4.1-1: The Town shall enforce the existing setback requirements along Mammoth Creek as they apply to the remaining undeveloped parcels to protect this important biological and scenic corridor. As necessary to protect the resource, the Town shall secure easements as the remaining parcels develop to ensure that the corridor is permanently protected.

GPMM 4.1-2: The Town shall amend the Design Review Guidelines to include standards to assure that public and private facilities in the vicinity of the Main Street (SR203) and the Old Mammoth Road intersection shall be designed to present an attractive face to the road. The standards shall address such issues as building height and massing, tree

preservation, and lighting to ensure that public and private development in proximity to SR203, which is eligible for designation as a scenic highway, do not detract from scenic resources.

GPMM 4.1-3: The Town through its environmental and design review process shall ensure that development at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport that is visible from Highway 395 is consistent with State scenic highway regulations for Highway 395.

GPMM 4.1-4: The Town shall review the existing Lighting Ordinance and revise the ordinance, where feasible, to protect views of the night sky and to ensure that the intent of the Lighting Ordinance is met. The Lighting Ordinance shall be amended to consider the feasibility of restrictions on lighting that include, but are not limited to: unshielded bulbs wattage restrictions, complete shielding on fixtures, shielding of all lights on buildings over approximately 35 feet tall, cumulative wattage limits, and holiday lighting timing limits.

(3) Trail System Master Plan Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

The MMRP for the Town's TSMP also contains mitigation measures that are applicable to the aesthetic component of the Mobility Element Update. Since these are adopted measures, for purposes of this EIR, these measures are applied where applicable to address the impacts of the Project design features. The following mitigation measures are from the Town's adopted TSMP MMRP:

TSM4.A-3.A: Trail development on slopes greater than 20 percent shall be avoided where feasible alternative alignments exist. If a feasible trail alignment does not exist, design features shall be employed to minimize erosion to the maximum extent feasible. Also refer to mitigation measures provided in Section 4.E, Geology/Soils, and Section 4.H, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this EIR, that also address soil erosion impacts.

TSM4.A-3.B: Mature, healthy, native trees shall be circumvented or avoided through the design of trail alignments to the extent feasible. The need for replacement of trees shall be evaluated and implemented based on Healthy Forest and Fire Safe Council principles.

TSM4.A-3.C: All disturbed areas, cuts, graded areas, and cleared areas should be stabilized and hydroseeded with an approved seed mix upon completion of the individual construction project, or as seasonally appropriate. Visually prominent cut areas that are too steep for re-vegetation shall be supported or covered with natural materials or materials that have a natural appearance.

TSM4.A-3.D: Retaining walls that are visually prominent shall be composed, to the extent feasible, of natural or natural-appearing materials, or finished or treated to give the appearance of natural materials. Generally, large, above-grade, plain concrete walls shall not be permitted.

TSM4.A-3.E: Adverse effects on natural features that stand out or are distinctive in a particular setting shall be avoided through the location and design of trail alignments. Where alignments cannot be avoided, additional screening vegetation shall be planted to obscure the trail relative to the adjacent feature.

TSM 4.A-3.F: Fill or debris piles and large construction equipment visible from public viewpoints shall be removed from construction sites as soon as practicable or located, covered and/or screened so as to minimize their visual appearance.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Scenic Vistas and Resources

Threshold AES-1 The project would result in a significant impact if the project would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Threshold AES-2 The project would result in a significant impact if the project would substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic resources within a state scenic highway.

Impact Statement AES-1 and AES-2: *Project implementation would not substantially block, obstruct, or change any scenic vista or other panoramic views that are available from public vantage points. Project implementation would also not substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Thus, Project implementation would result in less than significant impacts regarding scenic vistas and scenic resources.*

Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments

Future development within commercial zones along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road would be infill development. No new development would occur on ridgeline areas or other elevated or exposed areas that could result in new development intruding or altering public views of valuable scenic resources such as Sherwin Ridge or Mammoth Rock. As described in the Section 1. B, Existing Conditions, valued scenic resources visible from the downtown areas primarily includes views of Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock to the south and Mammoth Mountain to the west. Due to intervening development, trees, and snow drifts, the most expansive panoramic views of Sherwin Range and Mammoth Rock are generally visible from Main Street near north/south corridors such as Lupin Street, Joaquin Road, Sierra Park Road, and Old Mammoth Road. While new development could occur adjacent to these roadways, the existing public roadways of Old Mammoth Road, Lupin Street, Joaquin Road, Sierra Park Road and other north/south corridors, where scenic views of as Sherwin Ridge or Mammoth Rock are most pronounced would not be blocked or altered. In addition, the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not change the existing development standards, such as height, setbacks, parking requirements, and lot coverage. The current standards take into account the goals and policies of the Town's General Plan. As such, panoramic views to the south of Sherwin Ridge or Mammoth Rock would remain. In addition, new development would also undergo environmental review on a site-specific basis per CEQA requirements and as part of the PIEC, which requires the evaluation of project impacts on a project-by-project basis. These requirements would ensure that structures would be sited in a way that would not have substantial adverse effects to scenic vistas in conformance with the Town's General Plan.

New development would also be subject to existing design standards and policies contained in the Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines and General Plan which aim to preserve valued scenic vistas. Specific General Plan policies include: Building height, massing and scale shall complement neighboring land uses and preserve views to the surrounding mountains (C.2.V.); Maintain scenic public views and view corridors

that visually connect community to surroundings (C.2.W); and Limit building height to the trees on development sites where material tree coverage exists and use top of forest canopy in general area as height limit if no trees exist on site (C.2.X). Guidelines in the Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines aim to enhance views as seen from the street or other public area and preserve existing trees and forest views. Thus, implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not substantially block, obstruct, or change any scenic vista or other panoramic views to the south that are available from existing public vantage points. Therefore, implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would result in less than significant impacts regarding scenic vistas to the south.

Mobility Element Update

The intent of the General Plan Mobility Element Update is to achieve an integrated multi-modal transportation system that serves the various needs of residents, employees and visitors and to ensure that Mammoth Lakes will be connected, accessible, uncongested and safe with emphasis on feet first, public transportation second, and car last. Key principles related to aesthetics include the encouragement of context-sensitive design; recognizing that streets are an important component of place-making; the promotion of urban design principles through transportation and land use planning; and the enhancement of small town community character through the design of the transportation system. The Mobility Element Update also supports the removal snow and ice in ways that minimize environmental damage while increasing year-round access to streets, sidewalks, paths, bicycle facilities, and transit stops and the development of alternative snow removal technologies or methods, such as geothermal, solar, and de-icing treatments.

Regarding views of scenic vistas to the west, the proposed Mobility Element Update would change the relative location of buildings along Main Street, which are now separated from Main Street by diagonal parking and an approximately 24-foot-wide frontage road. Under the Mobility Element Update, the frontage road and diagonal parking would be removed, which would allow for buildings to be located approximately 35 feet closer to Main Street. The vacation of the frontage road and location of buildings closer to Main Street would narrow the view corridor Mammoth Mountain and could affect panoramic views of Mammoth Mountain to the west that are currently visible from this area. Implementation of the Mobility Element Update would reduce the right-of-way along Main Street from its existing width of 200 feet to 130 feet. The proposed 130-foot width would be a sufficient to provide a view corridor to the west to maintain views of Mammoth Mountain. No change would occur to the development standards such as heights and building setbacks. While the amount of open area affording direct views of Mammoth Mountain along Main Street would be narrower compared to existing conditions, with a width of 130 feet, panoramic views of Mammoth Mountain to the west would remain visible from public vantage points along Main Street.

Implementation of the Mobility Element Update would also include trail and recreational facility improvements throughout the Town including street crossing and bike lane improvements, and a variety of facilities such as signage, parking, restrooms, transit service, and enhanced trail access at recreational nodes. As discussed in the Trail System Master Plan (TSMP) EIR, implementation of new trail systems are not anticipated to result in broad or tall built features that could substantially impede scenic vistas or panoramic views or other expansive vistas of the natural landscape available from public roads, highways, parks, and other public vantage points in the area. Any new structures that could impede scenic views would be subject to the Town's Design Guidelines and Design Review processes, as applicable. As such, evaluation of such projects would occur on an individual basis for consistency and conformity with the General Plan, Zoning

Code, and other approved plans, policies, and regulations. In addition, policies in the TSMP require that trails be designed to take advantage of natural drainage and natural land features. As such impacts to scenic resources associated with trails and bicycle improvements were determined in the TSMP EIR to be less than significant.

Similar to the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments, any improvements occurring under the Mobility Element Update would undergo environmental review on a site-specific basis per CEQA requirements and as part of the PIEC, which requires the evaluation of impacts on a project-by-project basis to ensure that facilities and structures would be sited in a way that would not have substantial adverse effects to scenic vistas. New roadways or trails developed as part of the Mobility Element Update would be subject to design standards and design review that aim to preserve valued scenic vistas contained in the Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines and General Plan and would also be subject to GPMM.4.1-1 through GPMM .4.1-4 and TSMM4.A-3.A through TSMM4.A-3.F. Thus, implementation of the Mobility Element Update would not substantially block, obstruct, or change any scenic vista or other panoramic views to the south that are available from existing public vantage points. Because the facilities to be developed as part of the Project would not block or alter scenic vistas and the Project would not interfere with the intent of the California Scenic Highway Regulations to protect and enhance California's natural beauty and to protect the social and economic values provided by the state's scenic resources, the Project would not conflict with applicable policies of the California Scenic Highway Regulations. Therefore, implementation of the Mobility Element Update would result in a less than significant impact regarding scenic vistas and resources.

Mitigation Measures

Since the implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update would result in a less than significant impact with regard to scenic vistas and resources, no mitigation measures are necessary.

b. Visual Character and Quality

Threshold AES-3 The project would result in a significant impact if the project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

Impact Statement AES-3: *Changes to the built environment that would occur under the Mobility Element Update would complement existing development and the surrounding environment and would largely result in an improved and more visually cohesive visual character, particularly in the downtown area. The Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not alter the existing development standards, policies or design standards contained in the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan, Design Guidelines and Municipal Code. Therefore, buildout resulting from the Project would result in a less than significant impact to visual character and quality. However, construction activities may result in a temporary, visually unappealing quality. A mitigation measure is prescribed that would reduce construction impacts to a less than significant level.*

(1) Construction Activities

Construction activities generally contrast with the prevailing visual character of a local area. Implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not in and of itself trigger new development in the downtown area, and any new development would be subject to existing Town

requirements. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the long-term buildout of the Mobility Element Update Project would include the removal of the frontage road along Main Street and the installation of new landscaping, street crossing improvements, on-street bike lanes, trails, and the provision of amenities as funding becomes available. Future construction activities could require excavation and the use of heavy machinery. Other aspects of construction could be the generation and hauling of waste materials and debris, temporary stockpiling, possible scrubbing and clearing of vegetation. Construction activities could cause temporary degradation of visual quality with effects on views from adjacent roadways or trails. Visual impacts could also be exacerbated if several projects were to be under construction concurrently. While construction activities would be short-term and would not substantially alter, degrade, eliminate or generate long-term contrast with the visual character of the surrounding area, impacts could be significant. As such, Mitigation Measure AES-1 is recommended below to reduce the impact of construction activities on visual character and quality.

(2) Operational Activities

As described under existing conditions, currently the downtown commercial area lacks a cohesive, defined architecture style and aesthetic character. Individual properties are primarily single-use, free standing or strip commercial type development and have little landscaping. Businesses are mostly set behind surface parking lots and pedestrian infrastructure is largely absent. Along Main Street, frontage roads further blur the form of the street and separate storefronts from Main Street itself. While Old Mammoth Road has a more pedestrian-oriented character compared to Main Street, some parcels include large surface parking lots fronting the street edge and portions of Old Mammoth Road lack substantial landscaping, street furniture, and other pedestrian oriented features.

The Project would result in a more intensified downtown area than currently exists through the removal of the unit and room cap and the vacation of the frontage road along Main Street. However, implementation of the Mobility Element Update would result in various aesthetic improvements and unifying elements. A fundamental concept of the Main Street Plan is to create a memorable, positive aesthetic area within the downtown commercial area. These improvements have been incorporated into the Mobility Element Update. The aesthetic improvements would occur through the establishment of the complete street elements, as well as improved gateways, wayfinding signage, landscaping and street treatments such as benches, planters, and public art.

Implementation of the Mobility Element Update would result in a reduction of the right of way from 200 feet to 130 feet along Main Street. Buildings currently set back from the street, behind the frontage road, would be located at the street edge along Main Street creating a defined and cohesive street frontage. As shown in Figure 4.1-3, *Main Street Plan Conceptual Cross Section*, the streetscape would include wide sidewalks adjacent to new buildings with three zones: the building zone, the amenity zone, and the pedestrian zone. The building zone, adjacent to the buildings, would include an area for outdoor cafe seating, sidewalk sales racks, planters, stoops and other features often associated with commercial areas. The amenity zone would include streetscape furnishings such as benches and bike racks. Parking and vehicle travel lanes would be located adjacent to the amenity zone. Adjacent to this area would be a pedestrian sidewalk and parallel to the sidewalk would be a bicycle track or protected bike lane for bicyclists. While no change in the right-of-way width would occur on Old Mammoth Road, various pedestrian and bicycle improvements similar to Main Street would be provided as part of the Mobility Element Update. Old Mammoth Road would include continuous sidewalks and bicycle paths adjacent to the road and various pedestrian amenities such as street

furniture, landscaped areas, and public art. Thus, implementation of the Mobility Element Update would result in an improved and more visually cohesive visual character within the commercial core compared with current conditions.

Implementation of the Mobility Element Update improvements outside the downtown area would create new visible features and facilities, such as roadway striping; narrow lengths of pavement along roadways or easements, new traffic lights, and new public parking areas that would affect the visual character of the area. As discussed in the TSMP EIR, impacts to visual quality and character related to trail and bicycle improvements would be subject to the Town's Design Guidelines and Design Review processes, as applicable, which would evaluate projects for consistency and conformity with the General Plan, Zoning Code, and other approved plans, policies, and regulations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Improvements to existing roadways would not strongly contrast with the character and aesthetic value of the existing conditions. Therefore, such improvements would not negatively alter the existing visual character of the area. The creation of new roadways would be subject to the design parameters set forth in the Mobility Element Update which states the new roadways/improvements should be designed and sited to reflect the context of the surrounding environment. Furthermore, the creation of new roadways and improvements would be subject to the Town's Design Guidelines and Design Review processes. Thus, impacts on visual quality and character related to the Mobility Element Update would be less than significant.

Regarding changes related to the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments, the change to FAR could result in an increase in intensity but would not alter the current development standards, such as heights or setbacks. As allowed by Code, the commercial area could have buildings that are four to five stories which are taller than many of the existing one to three story structures downtown. New development would be subject to design guidelines and development standards and would be required to be designed to be visually interesting and to reflect Mammoth Lakes' unique character and mountain setting. Due to compliance with the Town's development standards and design review guidelines, buildings would be designed to include an attractive interface with the pedestrian environment and would be designed with appropriate building material and color that would blend in with the surrounding environment. Therefore, impacts on visual quality and character indirectly related to the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

As discussed above, potential impacts from construction activities could result in a significant aesthetic impact. Therefore, the following mitigation measure is recommended:

MM AES-1: Construction equipment staging areas shall use appropriate screening (i.e., temporary fencing with opaque material) to buffer views of construction equipment and material from public and sensitive viewers (e.g., residents and motorists/bicyclists/pedestrians), when feasible. Staging locations shall be indicated on the project Building Permit and Grading Plans and shall be subject to review by the Town of Mammoth Lakes Community and Economic Development Director in accordance with the Municipal Code requirements.

With the incorporation of design features and compliance with General Plan policies, the Project would not result in significant operational impacts to visual quality and character corridors. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

c. Light and Glare

Threshold AES-4 The project would result in a significant impact if the project would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Impact Statement AES-4: *With implementation of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, the Project would not create a new source of light or glare that would substantially alter the character of off-site areas or that would result in substantial light spill or glare onto adjacent light-sensitive receptors. Therefore, impacts regarding light and glare would be less than significant.*

Future development within the commercial districts along Main Street and Old Mammoth Road would be infill development within an already developed portion of the Town where light from roadways, buildings, signage and streetlights already substantially illuminate the area. All new development and improvements related to the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would be required to comply with the requirements of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Outdoor Lighting Ordinance which regulates nighttime lighting in order to promote a safe and pleasant nighttime environment for residents and visitors; to protect and improve safe travel for all modes of transportation; to prevent nuisances caused by unnecessary light intensity, direct glare, and light trespass; and to protect the ability to view the night sky by restricting unnecessary upward projection of light. With the exception of temporary lighting used for the construction or repair of roadways, utilities and lighting associated with improvements related to the Mobility Element Update would also be subject to the Town of Mammoth Lakes Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, which also provides regulations relative to street lighting.

Furthermore, new buildings and improvements would be subject to environmental and design review on a site-specific basis to ensure that light and glare impacts do not substantially increase the amount and intensity of nighttime lighting nor cause light spillover onto adjoining properties, do not reduce night sky visibility, and do not increase the potential for glare onto adjacent areas.

With implementation of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, lighting would be directed downward and would not create harsh contrasts or unnecessary light intensity, direct glare, and light trespass and would protect dark skies. As such, impacts with respect to light and glare would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

With compliance with applicable regulations, the Project would result in less than significant light and glare impacts. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

d. Shade/Shadow

Threshold AES-5: The Project would have a significant shade/shadow impact if shadow-sensitive uses would be shaded more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. PST (between early November and mid-March), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. PDT (between mid-March and early November).

Impact Statement AES-5: *Since the Mobility Element Update would result in a reduction in the right-of-way width along Main Street, buildings along Main Street would be located closer to SR 203 and would shade portions of SR 203 for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. PST during the Winter Solstice, potentially creating hazardous roadway conditions. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measure, shade/shadow impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.*

During the winter solstice, the sun's lower elevation in the southern sky causes buildings to cast shadows in a northwest, north, and northeast direction, with a relatively narrow path of travel between sunrise and sunset. The sun's lower elevation on the horizon also results in longer shadows than during summer, spring and fall, particularly at midday, and therefore analysis of shadow impacts during the winter solstice considers the period of greatest potential for off-site shading impacts.

Implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments would not alter existing regulatory requirements for development standards such as height, setbacks, and parking requirements. Therefore, no impacts to shade or shadow would occur as a result of implementation of the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments. However, implementation of the Mobility Element Update would result in a reduction in the right-of-way width along Main Street and would include the removal of the frontage road and diagonal parking, allowing for future buildings to be located approximately 35 feet closer to Main Street than under current conditions. For example, the Mobility Element Update could allow the development of two 55-foot buildings, one on each side of Main Street that would be separated by the 130 foot right-of-way rather than the 200 foot right-of-way that exists today. These changes would increase the amount and duration of shadows along Main Street and the potential for hazardous roadway and sidewalk conditions.

Two conceptual scenarios were developed based on a potential height of 45 feet permitted in the Mixed Use Lodging Residential (MLR) Zone and a potential height of 55 feet permitted in the Downtown (D) Zone. The buildings shown in the shade/shadow analysis are conceptual in nature and represent a maximum envelope that could occur as part of the Mobility Element Update. **Figure 4.1-9, Illustrative Conditions, (45 ft Building Heights) Winter Solstice Shadows (December 21)** and **Figure 4.10 Illustrative Conditions, (55 ft Building Heights) Winter Solstice Shadows (December 21)** show the shadow that could result from a conceptual building located on Main Street during the winter solstice. It should be noted that the buildings shown in Figures 4.1-9 and 4.1-10 are conceptual in nature and represent a maximum envelope that could occur as part of Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments or Mobility Element Update. Individual building designs would be subject to a subsequent environmental review as individual projects are proposed.

As shown in Figure 4.1-9, with a building height of 45 feet, buildings along the southern portion of Main Street would shade sidewalks and bicycle lanes along the south side of Main Street for more than three hours between the hours of 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The shadows would also extend into the travel lanes south of the landscaped median along Main Street (lanes traveling west to east) for more than three hours during the

same time period. Shading of the future roadway lanes and bicycle and pedestrian pathways for three hour duration could lead to hazardous roadway and pedestrian and bicycle pathway conditions. As such, shading impacts on the sidewalk, bicycle lanes, and travel lanes south of the landscaped median would be considered to be potentially significant.

On the north side of Main Street, shadows would also extend to the westbound automobile lanes and bicycle and sidewalks. However, the duration of the shadow on the westbound travel lanes would be less than two hours and shading duration on bicycle and pedestrian areas would be less than one hour. Thus, shading impacts from future 45-foot buildings located on the north side of Main Street on automobile lanes and bicycle and pedestrian areas on that side of Main Street would be less than significant.²

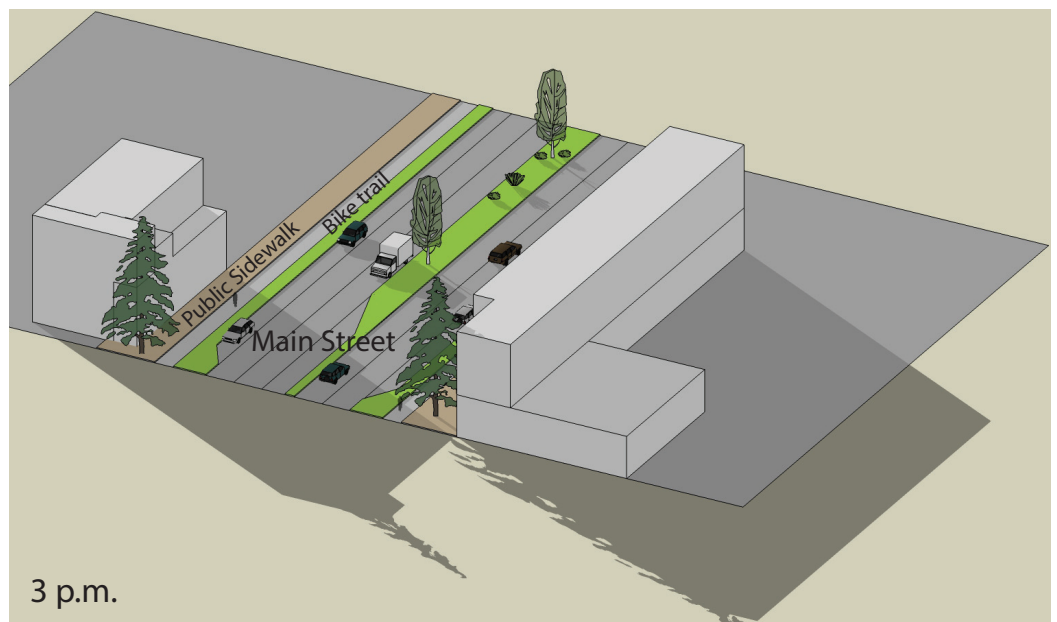
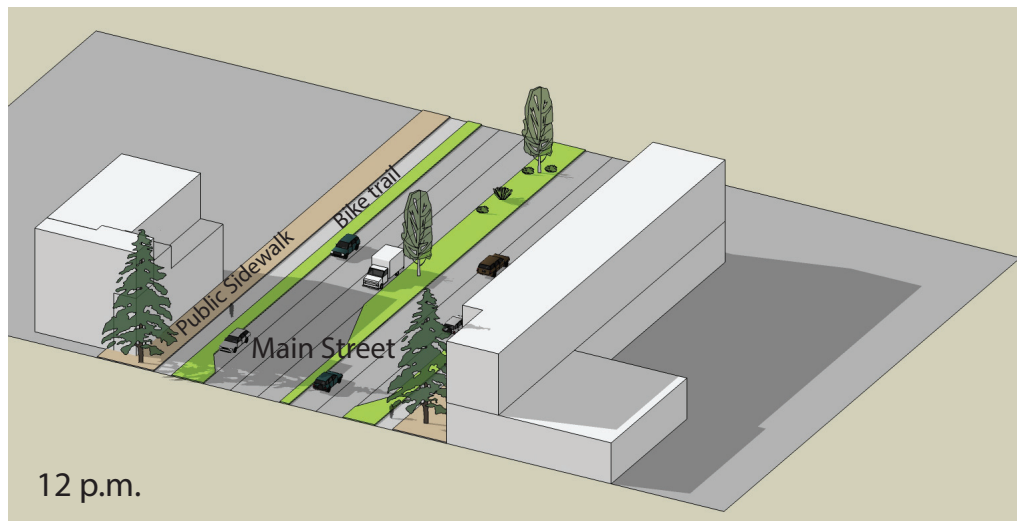
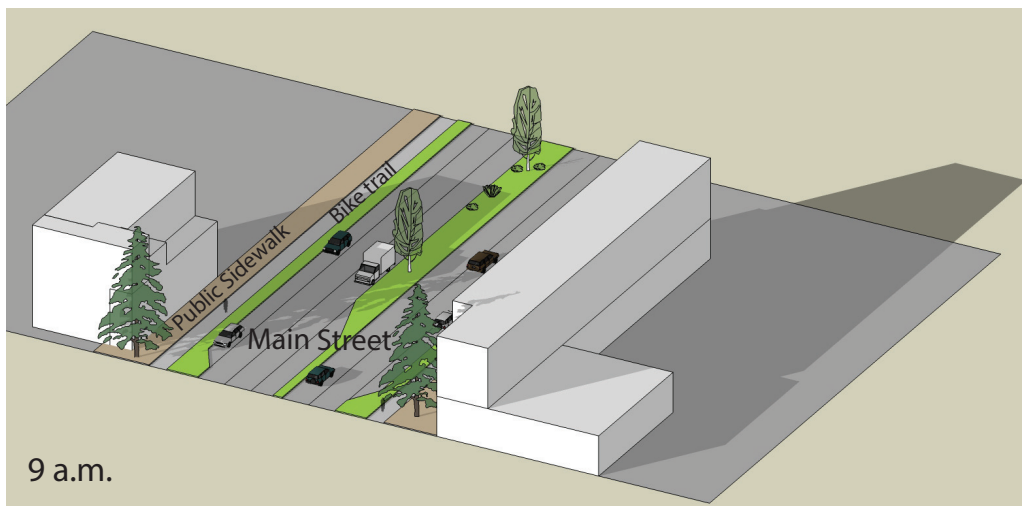
The same impacts would occur for building heights of 55 feet which could occur in the D zone (i.e., along Main Street generally west of Sierra Boulevard, to Sierra Park Road and portions of Old Mammoth Road near the intersection of Main Street). As shown in Figure 4.1-10, potential buildings along the southern portion of Main Street would shade sidewalks and bicycle lanes along the south side of Main Street and all travel lanes for more than three hours. While shadows would extend to bicycle and sidewalk areas along the north side of Main Street, the duration of the shadow would be less than two hours. Thus, with a 55-foot building located on the south side of Main Street, shading impacts on travel lanes and bicycle and pedestrian areas on the south side of Main Street would be potentially significant.

To ensure that shading of Main Street does not result in hazardous roadway conditions (i.e., ice and snow), a mitigation measure is recommended. MM AES-2 requires that a shade/shadow analysis be conducted for proposed new buildings or substantial additions in the C-1 and C-2 designations. If a significant shading impact would result, the mitigation measure requires that a snowmelt system shall be installed if necessary in the pedestrian and bicycle areas and/or enhanced snow removal through a maintenance agreement or participation in an assessment district would be implemented to address potential significant impacts on vehicle travel lanes. In addition, since vehicles travelling at unsafe speeds in winter conditions can result in accidents resulting in additional emergency calls, the measure includes funding to reduce these potential impacts. The Town of Mammoth Lakes shall review the methods and effectiveness of these measures during its implementation to ensure that hazardous roadway conditions do not occur. Implementation of the prescribed mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant hazardous roadway impacts as a result of shading to a less than significant level.

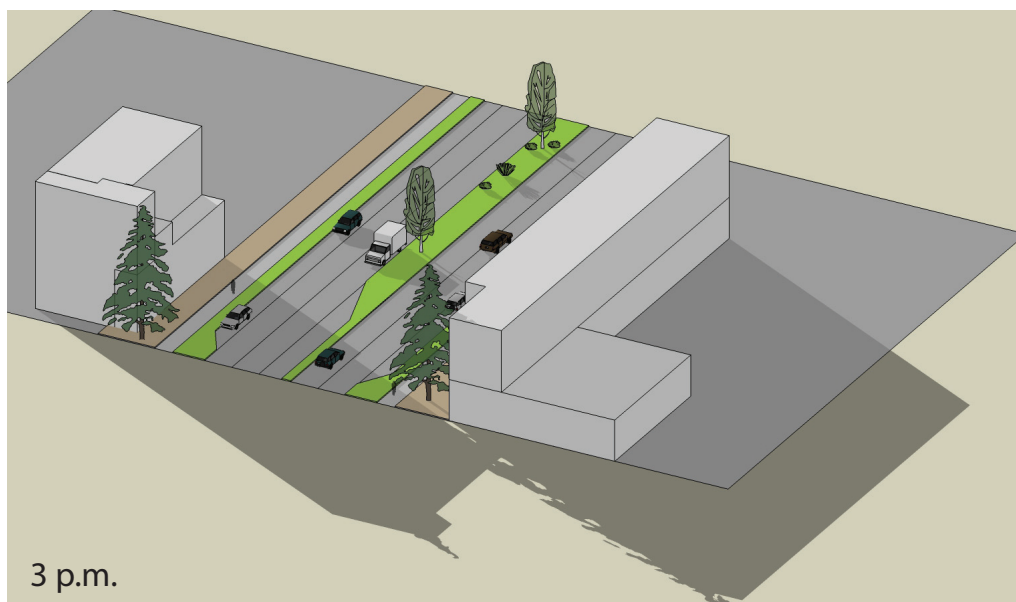
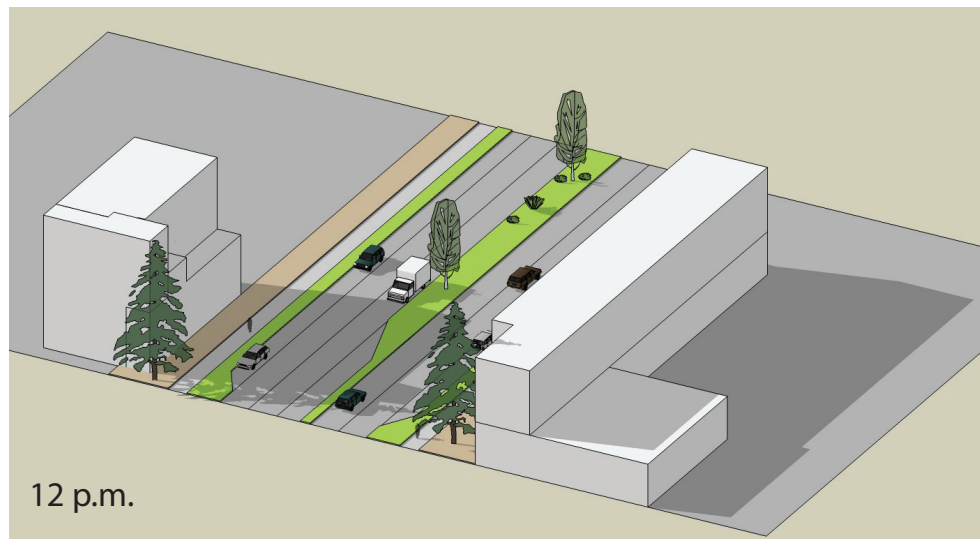
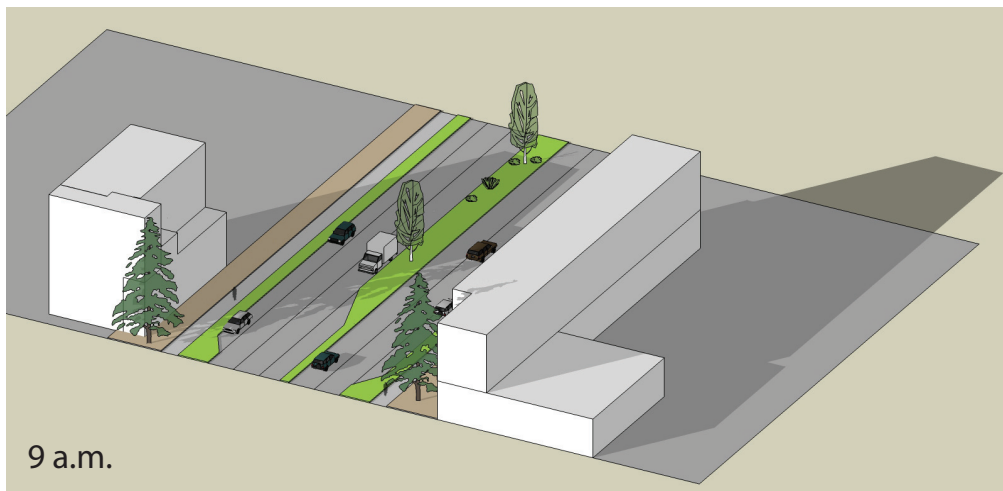
Mitigation Measures

MM AES-2: Development projects, which include new buildings or a substantial addition to an existing structure, within the C-1 and C-2 designations shall prepare a shade/shadow analysis. If the analysis indicates that the project would result in shading on Main Street or Old Mammoth Road for more than three hours per day for longer than a week, the applicant of the proposed project shall provide approved and appropriate measures to mitigate potential vehicle and pedestrian safety hazards related to ice and snow. Such measures shall be reviewed and approved by the Town and/or Caltrans as appropriate and can include the following:

² The model used to conduct the shade/shadow analysis does not take topography into account. If development occurred on the south side of Main Street at a higher elevation than the roadway, the length of the shadow would increase resulting in greater impacts. Conversely, if the property were at a lower elevation than the roadway, the extent of shadows would be reduced.



NOTE: The buildings shown are conceptual in nature and represent a maximum envelope that could occur as part of Land Use Element/Zoning Code amendments or Mobility Element Update. However, these figures are for illustrative purposes only to understand generally the shade/shadow impacts that might occur. Individual building designs would be subject to a subsequent environmental review as individual projects are proposed.



NOTE: The buildings shown are conceptual in nature and represent a maximum envelope that could occur as part of Land Use Element/Zoning Code amendments or Mobility Element Update. However, these figures are for illustrative purposes only to understand generally the shade/shadow impacts that might occur. Individual building designs would be subject to a subsequent environmental review as individual projects are proposed.

- Install a snowmelt system, such as heat traced pavement, along the pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
- Enter into a maintenance agreement with the Town and/or Caltrans to perform enhanced snow removal operations to ensure that ice related to shading impacts are sufficiently mitigated. Enhanced snow removal could include additional cindering, additional snow removal operations, or other effective ice removal techniques.
- Participate in an assessment district to provide enhanced snow removal operations.
- Specifically to mitigate hazards associated with vehicles traveling at an unsafe speed during winter conditions, measures may include but are not limited to, funding for enhanced enforcement and driver awareness programs such as driver feedback signs (i.e. radar control speed signs or equivalent) to be placed on Main Street in areas adjacent to where the shading occurs.

4. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts would be associated with the development of vacant parcels and redevelopment of already developed parcels in the Town's commercial area under the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and transportation improvements associated with the Mobility Element Update which would occur town wide.

Concurrent construction of several related projects within the Town in association with the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update could result in cumulative short-term impacts associated with construction activities. Construction activities for related projects in conjunction with the Project would require the use of heavy equipment and storage of materials at construction staging areas. Other aspects of construction could be the generation and hauling of waste materials and debris, temporary stockpiling, possible scrubbing and clearing of vegetation. These activities could cause temporary degradation of visual quality with effects on views from adjacent roadways or trails. As discussed above, temporary construction impacts associated with the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update would be short-term and would not substantially alter, degrade, eliminate or generate long-term contrast with the visual character of the surrounding area, impacts could be significant. Mitigation Measure AES-1, which would ensure screening of construction equipment and material from public and sensitive viewers (e.g., residents and motorists/bicyclists/pedestrians), when feasible, is recommended to reduce the potential impact of construction activities on visual character and quality. In accordance with Municipal Code requirements, all projects must indicate staging locations on plans that are subject to review by the Town of Mammoth Lakes Community and Economic Development Director. With implementation of Town requirements as well as Mitigation Measure AES-1, the Project would not contribute to a cumulative visual construction impact.

Regarding impacts after development, it is anticipated that all related projects would undergo environmental review on a site-specific basis to ensure that facilities and structures would be sited in a way that would not have substantial adverse effects to scenic vistas, aesthetics, light and glare and shade/shadow. New development would be subject to the Town's design standards and design review that aim to preserve valued scenic vistas and community character contained in the Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines and General Plan.

With the incorporation of design features and compliance with General Plan policies, the Project would not result in significant operational impacts to visual quality and character corridors. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary. Additionally, all new development would be required to comply with the requirements of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Outdoor Lighting Ordinance which regulates nighttime lighting in order to promote a safe and pleasant nighttime environment for residents and visitors; to protect and improve safe travel for all modes of transportation; to prevent nuisances caused by unnecessary light intensity, direct glare, and light trespass; and to protect the ability to view the night sky by restricting unnecessary upward projection of light.

With implementation of MM AES-2, the Project would not result in any significant shading impacts that would create potential hazardous roadway conditions. More specifically, MM AES-2 would require that if a project would result in a shading impact that a snowmelt system shall be installed if necessary in the pedestrian and bicycle areas and/or enhanced snow removal through a maintenance agreement or participation in an assessment district would be implemented to address potential significant impacts on vehicle travel lanes. In addition, since vehicles travelling at unsafe speeds in winter conditions can result in accidents resulting in additional emergency calls, the measure includes funding to reduce these potential impacts. Compliance with MM AES-2 would reduce shade/shadow impacts to less than significant. As the Project would not result in significant aesthetics impacts, the Project with the incorporation of mitigation measures and compliance with design standards, existing regulations and applicable policies as well as previously adopted mitigation measures, would result in a less than significant cumulative impact regarding aesthetics.

5. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of the prescribed MM AES-1 would ensure that temporary visual quality construction impacts related to the construction of Mobility Element Update improvements would be less than significant. Mitigation Measure AES-2 would ensure that potential hazards resulting from shading impacts along Main Street related to implementation of the Mobility Element Update would be less than significant. Therefore, with the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures regarding construction activities and shade/shadow as well as compliance with design features and regulatory requirements and applicable policies, aesthetic impacts from the Land Use Element/Zoning Code Amendments and Mobility Element Update would be less than significant.