



5.2 Aesthetics/Light and Glare

5.2 AESTHETICS/LIGHT AND GLARE

This section assesses the potential for aesthetic impacts using accepted methods of evaluating visual quality, as well as identifying the type and degree of change the proposed project would likely have on the character of the landscape. The analysis in this section is primarily based on information provided by the Town and verified through site reconnaissance conducted by Michael Baker International (Michael Baker) on January 12, 2016 and June 8, 2016. Photographic documentation and project-specific documentation are utilized to supplement the visual analysis and to fulfill the requirements of CEQA.

5.2.1 EXISTING SETTING

The Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town) is an alpine resort community located in the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Range, within southwestern Mono County, California. The Town is specifically located within the Mammoth Lakes Basin at the eastern foothills of Mammoth Mountain (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. Native trees within Mammoth Lakes include red firs, Jeffrey pines, lodgepole pines, white firs, and aspens. Barren rock outcroppings, avalanche slopes, and surface waters (i.e., streams, lakes, seeps, and snow) are visible throughout the Town. Mammoth Creek traverses the Town and flows in an easterly direction. The urbanized portions of the Town range from 7,800 to 8,600 feet above mean sea level (amsl). The approximately 4.9-acre project site is located at Mammoth Creek Park West (686 Old Mammoth Road); refer to [Exhibit 3-2](#).

SCENIC VIEWS AND VISTAS

According to the General Plan, the Town has historically been sensitive to the need to protect and provide access to available scenic resources and has developed a system of public parks, trails, vistas, and view corridors. Although the General Plan and Municipal Code do not protect private views, the Town's development standards help preserve public scenic views and regulate the visual and physical mass of structures. The Town has designated public view corridors and vistas that to take advantage of significant public views. Notably, public scenic views of Mammoth Mountain, Sherwin Range, Mammoth Crest, White Mountains, Mammoth Knolls, and Crystal Crag are provided throughout the Town. The General Plan provides policies to protect public views of these visual resources.

According to Figure 1, *Major View Corridors and Vistas*, of the General Plan, scenic western public views of Mammoth Mountain, and southern views of the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest are afforded from the project site and public viewers in the immediate vicinity. The public views to the surrounding scenic resources are described more in detail below.

Southbound Old Mammoth Road

Southbound motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists on Old Mammoth Road are currently afforded views of the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest to the south. The project site is also within the

viewshed of southbound viewers along Old Mammoth Road. Existing southbound views are nominally inhibited by on-site mature trees.

Town Loop Trail

The Town Loop Trail, located to the south and east of the project site, provides scenic views of Mammoth Mountain to the west of the project site. Trail users on the Town Loop Trail traveling west are also afforded views of the project site.

Mammoth Creek Park West

Recreational users at the existing Mammoth Creek Park West are afforded southern views to the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest, and western views towards Mammoth Mountain. Some view blockage of these scenic resources occurs due to existing mature on-site trees.

VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY

A photographic inventory of the project area was conducted to document the existing visual character and quality of the project site and its surroundings; refer to [Exhibit 5.2-1, On-Site Existing Condition Photographs](#). The most prominent factors influencing the character of the project site and its surroundings are views of the surrounding mountains, including the Sherwin Range, Mammoth Mountain, and Mammoth Crest, which increase the vividness of the landscape. Structures in the surrounding area appear to range in height from one to three stories with varying architectural details. Surrounding buildings include a mix of uses fronting the public streets (e.g., restaurants, retail stores, offices, and residential uses). Other features that contribute to the character of the landscape include big sagebrush scrub and native pine trees (primarily Jeffrey pine and lodgepole pine).

LIGHT AND GLARE

Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, and landscape lighting). Light introduction can be a nuisance to adjacent residential areas, diminish the view of the clear night sky, and if uncontrolled, can cause disturbances. Uses such as residences and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.



View of the existing playground and park space on the project site, and the Sherwin Range to the south.



View of existing vegetation in the western portion of the project site.



Eastward view of the project site.



View of existing on-site playground equipment.

NOT TO SCALE

Michael Baker
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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
MAMMOTH CREEK PARK WEST
NEW COMMUNITY MULTI-USE FACILITIES
On-Site Existing Condition Photographs

Exhibit 5.2-1

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light by highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation as observed by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior facades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

Currently, light and glare sources are nominal at the project site (one exterior security light on the Mammoth Creek Park West bathroom facility). The primary lighting sources in the vicinity of the project site include pedestrian street lighting along Old Mammoth Road, as well as interior and exterior lighting at the surrounding commercial and residential uses.

Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by reflection of artificial light sources, such as automobile headlights. Glare 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. Currently, daytime glare on-site and in the project area include vehicle headlights along the surrounding roadways and parking lots. Nighttime glare is currently emitted by pedestrian lighting, street lighting, and exterior security lighting at commercial and residential uses in the area.

5.2.2 REGULATORY SETTING

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES GENERAL PLAN

Town policies pertaining to visual character related to the proposed project are contained in the Community Design, Resource Management and Conservation, and Neighborhood and District Character Elements of the General Plan (adopted August 15, 2007).

The Community Design Element's goals and policies describe the relationship between people and the man-made and natural environment. Because the community is set within the forest, trees and the natural landscape are prominent, create a sense of scale, and set a strong aesthetic character. Topography, vegetation, existing buildings, and open spaces create the structure and pattern of Mammoth Lakes. The applicable aesthetics/light and glare-related policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Create well-designed and significant public spaces in resort/commercial developments to accommodate pedestrians and encourage social interaction and community activity (C.2.A).
- Encourage development of distinct districts, each with an appropriate density and a strong center of retail, services, or amenities (C.2.C).
- Preserve and enhance special qualities of districts through focused attention on land use, community design, and economic development (C.2.D).

- 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 (C.2.F).
- Be stewards in preserving public views of surrounding mountains, ridgelines, and knolls (C.2.J).
- 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 (C.2.L).
- 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 (C.2.M).
- 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 (C.2.O).
- Use natural, high quality building materials to reflect Mammoth Lakes' character and mountain setting (C.2.T).
- Require unique, authentic, and diverse design that conveys innovation and creativity and discourages architectural monotony (C.2.U).
- 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 (shown in Figures 1 and 2¹) that visually connect community to surroundings (C.2.W).
- 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).
- Establish entry and district monumentation standards as a means of reinforcing community identity (C.3.A).
- Development shall provide pedestrian-oriented facilities, outdoor seating, plazas, weather protection, transit waiting areas, and other streetscape improvements (C.3.D).
- 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 (C.3.E).

¹ Reference to Figure 1, *Major View Corridors and Vistas*, and Figure 2, *Vistas and Landmarks*, of the Community Design Element of the General Plan.

- Development shall be designed to provide stewardship for significant features and natural resources of the site (C.4.A).
- To retain the forested character of the town, require use of native and compatible plant species in public and private developments and aggressive replanting with native trees (C.4.B).
- Retain overall image of a community in a forest by ensuring that native trees are protected wherever possible and remain an important component of the community (C.4.C).
- Retain the forested character of the town by requiring development to pursue aggressive replanting with native trees and other compatible species (C.4.D).
- 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 (C.4.E).
- Require outdoor light fixtures to be shielded and down-directed so as to minimize glare and light trespass (C.5.A).
- Enforce removal, replacement, or retrofit of non-shielded or non-down-directed light fixtures that contribute to glare and light pollution (C.5.B).
- Improve pedestrian safety by eliminating glare for motorists through use of non-glare roadway lighting. A light fixture's source of illumination shall not be readily visible at a distance. Number of fixtures used shall be adequate to evenly illuminate for pedestrian safety (C.5.C).

The Resource Management and Conservation Element's goals and policies establish ways to wisely manage the Town's natural resources and ensure their preservation for future generations. Because the community is surrounded by mountainous terrain, this natural landscape creates a sense of scale and place, and provides the community with scenic views. The applicable aesthetics/light and glare-related goals and policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Preserve and enhance the exceptional natural, scenic and recreational value of Mammoth Creek (R.3).
- Prohibit development in the vicinity of Mammoth Creek that does not maintain minimum established setbacks and protect stream-bank vegetation (R.3.A).

The Neighborhood and District Character Element addresses the development of individual sites and districts in order to enhance the unique character of Mammoth Lakes. The General Plan denotes that the Town is comprised of 12 districts and four mountain portals. Existing development, patterns of vegetation, topographic features, circulation patterns, and land use patterns and relationships define District boundaries. Figure 3, *District Map*, of the General Plan, illustrates the districts' boundaries and indicates that the project site is located in the Snowcreek District. The Snowcreek District is intended to connect the larger community and provide community access to Snowcreek and to surrounding public lands. According to the General Plan, the Snowcreek District

should be designed to be a livable neighborhood, including workforce housing, convenience retail, public amenities, and active/passive recreation facilities. Development in this district is encouraged to contribute to the Town's overall economy, tourism and mix of recreation amenities while preserving the area's unique features. The Snowcreek District objectives that are particularly relevant to the proposed project in the context of aesthetics include the following:

- Characteristic 1: Western range and meadow: spacious setting, broad and wide open with backdrop of Sherwin Range.
- Characteristic 2: Anchor for and a greater connection to Old Mammoth District.
- Characteristic 3: Stress stewardship of land and resources.
- Characteristic 4: Provide access and staging areas to Sherwin Range and "community" uses accessible from Old Mammoth Road.
- Characteristic 5: A variety of resort lodging supported by restaurants, resort services, neighborhood conveniences, commercial, retail, and outdoor ancillary recreation designed as a traditional small-scale village:
 - a. Active day and evening and through all four seasons.
 - b. Dispersed structures, light on the land, vertical emphasis and detailing (not heavy or strong horizontality).
 - c. Landscape that reinforces sage, manzanita and wet meadow.
- Characteristic 6: Full service four-season resort with visitor/recreation amenities such as:
 - a. Horseback, sleigh and hay wagon rides, golf and tennis.
 - b. Clubhouse with food and beverage service.
 - c. Special events "town commons".
 - d. Center for arts and culture.
- Characteristic 7: Integrated Mammoth Creek Park and Mammoth Creek Corridor, the historical museum site, equestrian center, parking, trails, and snow play, and future possibilities such as a recreations center or amphitheater.

DESIGN REVIEW ORDINANCE

The Town's Zoning Code Chapter 17.88, *Design Review*, outlines the following objectives of the design review requirements:

- Implement the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan related to community design and character;
- Promote excellence in site planning and design and the harmonious appearance of buildings and sites and ensure the man-made environment is designed to complement, not dominate, the natural environment;

- Regulate the design, coloration, materials, illumination, and landscaping of new construction, and renovations within the Town in order to maintain and enhance the image, attractiveness, and environmental qualities of the Town as a mountain resort community;
- Ensure that new landscaping provides a visually pleasing setting for structures on the site and within the public right-of way and to prevent indiscriminate destruction of trees and natural vegetation, excessive or unsightly grading, indiscriminate clearing of property, and destruction of natural significant landforms;
- Ensure that the architectural design of structures and their materials and colors are appropriate to the function of the project and the high-elevation climate of Mammoth Lakes and are visually harmonious with surrounding development and natural landforms, trees, and vegetation; and
- Supplement other Town regulations and standards in order to ensure control of aspects of design that are not otherwise addressed.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The policies and goals presented in the Town Design Guidelines represent the goals and desires of residents and property owners pertaining to the design of new development in the Town. All new structures and all structures that are being renovated, other than single-family homes below 8,250 feet elevation, are subject to compliance with the Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines provide a greater level of detail regarding the type of development that promotes the Town's Vision Statement, General Plan, and Municipal Code.

Pursuant to Chapter 9.0, *Design Review Process*, of the Design Guidelines, the design review process is to be conducted by the Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC). As part of the Design Guidelines Review Process, the CEDD reviews project materials such as drawings, site development plans, landscape plans, building elevations, cross-sections, sample materials/color palettes, and visual simulations to determine compliance with the Design Guidelines. All Town staff findings and recommendations are forwarded to the PEDC in a staff report. At the PEDC Meeting, the PEDC may deny, approve, approve with conditions, or continue the hearing to receive additional input with regards to a project's compliance to the Design Guidelines.

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES MUNICIPAL CODE

Outdoor Lighting Regulations

Municipal Code Section 17.36.030 regulates outdoor lighting within the Town. These regulations provide rules and regulations for outdoor lighting within the Town in order to promote a safe and pleasant nighttime environment, to protect and improve safe travel, to prevent nuisances caused by unnecessary light, to protect the ability to view the night sky, to phase out nonconforming fixtures, and to promote energy conservation.

Construction Hours of Operation

Municipal Code Section 15.08.020 regulates hours of construction within the Town. Operations permitted under a building permit are limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Work hours on Sundays and town recognized holidays are limited to the hours between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and permitted only with the approval of the building official or designee.

5.2.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form used during preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (refer to Impact Statement AES-2);
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings (refer to Impact Statements AES-1 and AES-3); and/or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area (refer to Impact Statement AES-4).

Based on these standards, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or a “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.2.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SHORT-TERM VISUAL IMPACTS

AES-1 PROJECT GRADING AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY OF THE SITE OR ITS SURROUNDINGS.

Impact Analysis: As the project site is situated on the urban fringe of Town, the project site is surrounded by development (including residential uses) to the southwest, west, and north, and vacant land to the east and south. Mammoth Creek is present in the vicinity and includes associated riparian vegetation that contributes to the existing character/quality of the area.

Construction of the proposed project would temporarily disturb the character of the site, affecting the quality of the landscape during this time. Project construction is anticipated to occur in three phases, with phases 1 and 2 possibly being constructed concurrently, beginning in June 2017 and concluding in February 2023. Construction would remove some of the existing on-site vegetation to allow for construction of the proposed project. Following site preparation activities, the construction of the proposed multi-use facilities structures and landscape improvements would occur.

Construction staging and parking areas would occur within the boundaries of the project site. Views of the construction activities and staging area on the project site would be visible from the residential uses to the north, west, and southwest. However, with implementation of the recommended Mitigation Measure AES-1, equipment staging areas would provide appropriate screening (i.e., temporary fencing with opaque material) and would reduce views toward construction staging areas, to the extent feasible.

During project construction, dump trucks and other trucks hauling grading materials would be visible. Delivery and removal of excavation equipment, cranes, other machinery, and for the delivery of materials would be seen. As with on-site activities, the visual aspect of trucks loaded with debris and/or soils would be interesting to some viewers and unsightly to others. Proposed access to the site for dump trucks, semi-trailers, and truck and trailers in the removal of excavated soils and delivery of heavy equipment would primarily occur via Old Mammoth Road in the eastern portion of the project site as well as Meadow Lane to the west of the project site. With the implementation of standard conditions of approval, grading plans would be required for submittal concurrently with the development plans and would be subject to approval through the design review process set forth by the PEDC. All grading and earthwork activities would be conducted in accordance with an approved construction grading plan and grading permit issued by the Mammoth Lakes Public Works Department. Additionally, in accordance with Mitigation Measure AES-2, a Hauling Plan would be subject to approval by the Town's Community and Economic Development Department.

During grading and excavation activities (which would take place at the initial stage of construction), there would be temporary construction fencing to screen most activities (i.e., construction equipment, soil piles, etc.) from surrounding uses. However, it is likely that construction vehicles and activities would still be visible. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 would reduce impacts resulting from construction activities via screening of staging areas, and a construction hauling plan. Thus, construction-related visual impacts are considered to be temporary impacts. The short-term impacts to the site's visual character/quality would be reduced to less than significant levels upon implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2.

Mitigation Measures:

- AES-1 Construction equipment staging areas shall be screened (i.e., temporary fencing with opaque material) to buffer views of construction equipment and material, when feasible. Staging locations shall be indicated on Final Development Plans and Grading Plans.
- AES-2 The construction hauling plan shall be prepared and approved by the Public Works Director prior to issuance of grading permit. The plan shall ensure that construction haul routes minimize impacts to sensitive uses in the Town.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

SCENIC VIEWS AND VISTAS

AES-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE AFFECT ON A SCENIC VIEW OR VISTA.

Impact Analysis: As previously noted, the project site is located within the viewshed of Mammoth Mountain, the Sherwin Range, and Mammoth Crest (identified visual resources). The Town's General Plan and Municipal Code do not protect private views. Thus, no impacts would result in this regard. However, the General Plan does protect designated public views. Designated public views in the project area encompass the project and identified visual resources. Specifically, these designated public views include the following:

- Motorists, bicyclist, and pedestrians traveling southbound on Old Mammoth Road (to the northeast and east of the project site);
- Pedestrians and bicyclists using the Town Loop Trail (to the south and east of the project site); and
- Mammoth Creek Park West users (at the project site).

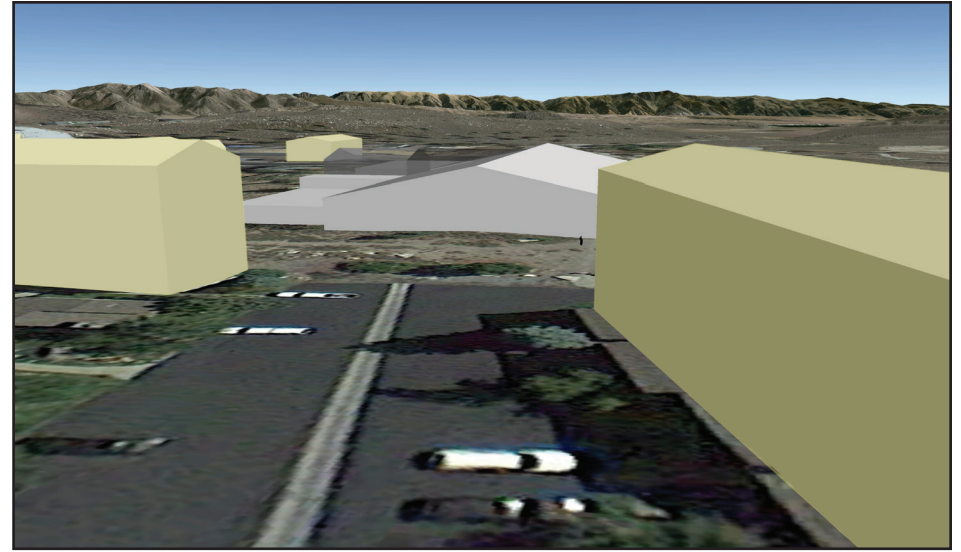
Implementation of the proposed project would result in a new single-story multi-use structure at the project site. The proposed structure would be surrounded by a paved parking area to the north/northeast, hardscaped plazas to the north, northeast, and east, and existing playground to the east. The proposed structure would not be taller than 35 feet at its highest point (at the peak of the ice rink roof). Overall, the mass and scale of the structure would be similar to those of the surrounding land uses, which range between approximately 15 and 40 feet in height; refer to [Exhibit 5.2-2, Proposed Project Conceptual Massing](#).

Southbound Old Mammoth Road. Although views from Old Mammoth Road include views to the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest, views of these resources particularly at the project site are mostly obstructed as a result of existing mature pine trees and residential development to the southwest and west of the project site. Project implementation would result in the construction of a new 35-foot building, setback approximately 265 feet west of Old Mammoth Road. This new structure would not result in additional view blockage, compared to the existing pine trees in the vicinity and residential development that extend up to 40 feet in height. Thus, the proposed project would not increase view blockage of these visual resources as seen from southern views along Old Mammoth Road. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

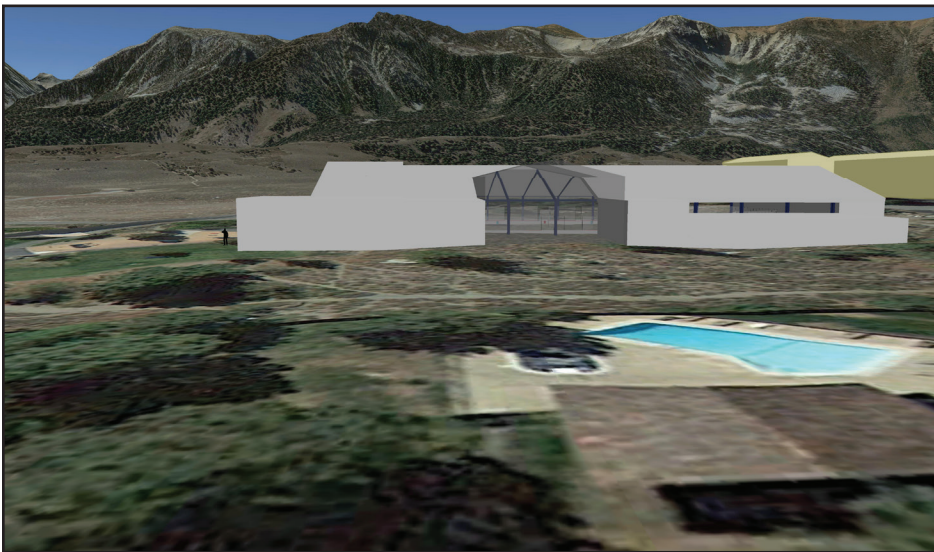
Town Loop Trail. Western views of Mammoth Mountain and southwestern view toward the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest from the Town Loop Trail are currently afforded for recreational trail users. However, similar to views experienced along Old Mammoth Road, trail views would be sporadic as a result of existing mature pine trees and surrounding residential development. As the trail is situated to the south of the project site, and scenic views are westward, development of the proposed structure at the project site would not result in view obstruction of these resources. Thus, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.



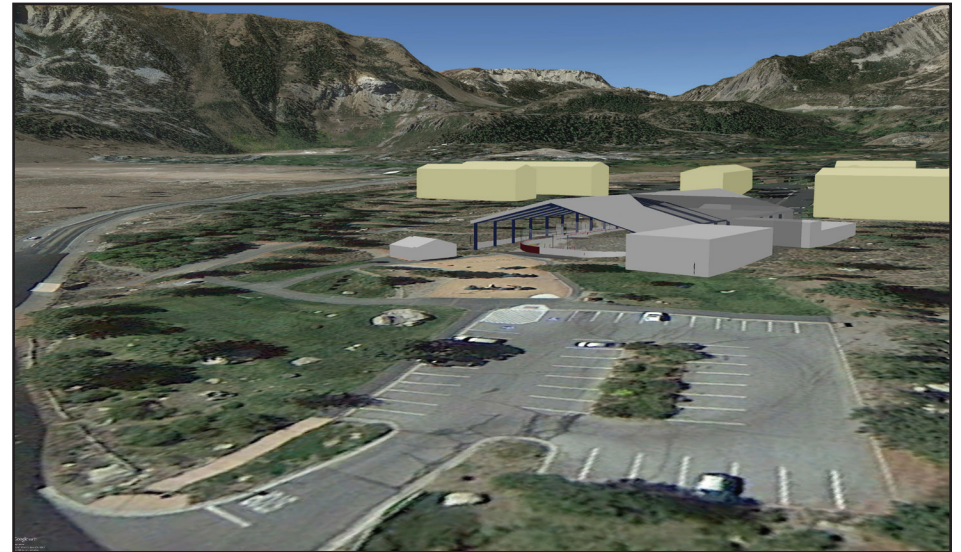
Perspective view looking northwest. Mammoth Creek Condominiums, La Vista Blanc Condominiums, Chateau Blanc #2 and Chateau de Montague Condominiums visible in the background.



Perspective view looking east from the terminus of Meadow Lane.



Perspective view looking south from near the pool area of the Chateau Blanc #2 Condominiums.



Perspective view looking southwest near Old Mammoth Road. La Vista Blanc and Mammoth Creek Condominiums visible in the background.

 - Buildings that are located off-site.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
MAMMOTH CREEK PARK WEST
NEW COMMUNITY MULTI-USE FACILITIES
Proposed Project Conceptual Massing

Exhibit 5.2-2

Mammoth Creek Park West. The project site currently provides scenic views of the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest to the south, and of Mammoth Mountain to the west from the existing Mammoth Creek Park West facility. These views are primarily afforded from the grass area and playground at Mammoth Creek Park West in the eastern portion of the project site. However, although afforded, these views are still sporadic as a result of existing mature pine trees both at the project site and in the vicinity. Upon construction of the proposed project, the existing Mammoth Creek Park West would be expanded to allow for increased public opportunity to utilize the project site. Due to the open nature of the proposed ice rink, the project would result in an increase in available southern public views toward the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest. Thus, public views at the project site toward scenic resources would be increased and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Due to the proposed setbacks, massing, and scale of the new multi-use facilities structure, existing views of the Sherwin Range, Mammoth Crest, and Mammoth Mountain would not be obstructed. In addition, the project design would allow for increased public views of the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest to the south from the proposed structure. Therefore, project implementation would result in a less than significant impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LONG-TERM VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY

AES-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD DEGRADE THE VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

Impact Analysis: The project site is currently developed with Mammoth Creek Park West. This existing recreational facility provides active recreational (park and picnic) opportunities at the project site. The majority of the western portion of the project site is open space/scrub habitat that is only nominally accessible to the public. As Mammoth Creek Park West is situated along the urban fringe of the Town, the existing visual character at the site includes both active and passive recreational land uses with a partially forested character partial distant views to the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest to the south, and Mammoth Mountain to the west.

Development of the proposed project would alter the existing visual character of the site and surrounding area, as a new 35-foot structure serving additional recreational opportunities, new hardscape and landscaping, and increased surface parking lot would be constructed at the project site. Existing access/circulation would remain similar to existing conditions. The new structure, including building architecture and color scheme would be required to be consistent with the policies and goals of the Town's Design Guidelines. Per Municipal Code Chapter 17.88, the overall color scheme would be subject to the Town Design Guidelines Color Handbook, subject to approval by the Town PEDC. The project would construct a perimeter wall along the periphery of the rink, between the structures for the first phase of the project. This new wall feature would be constructed of similar color, material, and architectural style as the proposed structures. This wall would also be subject to the Town's Design Guidelines and Architectural Review process as well.

Per Municipal Code Section 17.32.100(c), landscape design would be required to be Town standards. Large pine trees are present on-site and may be required to be removed as part of the proposed project. However, all tree removal activities would be required to comply with Municipal Code Section 17.36.140, which requires a tree removal and protection plan. For those trees removed, the Town would be required to mitigate with tree replacement at a ratio determined by the Community and Economic Development Manager (refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1). If replacement plantings of the removed trees is required, the minimum replacement tree size would be required to be seven gallons. Further, replacement would be limited to plantings in areas suitable for tree replacement with species identified in the Town of Mammoth Lakes' Recommended Plant List. Replacement requirements may also be determined based on the valuation of the tree as determined by a Registered Professional Forester or arborist. Overall, the Design Review process would ensure that landscaping would enhance the character of the on-site development and would be required to be compatible with, and complementary to, the natural environment in Mammoth Lakes and the surrounding region.

Although the proposed project would increase the active recreational uses at the project site (including construction of a new 35-foot structure), the existing views toward visual resources would at Mammoth Creek Park West would be expanded. Proposed landscaping would be required to meet Municipal Code requirements, including tree replacement. Further, the proposed 35-foot structure would be similar in visible massing to the existing buildings in the surrounding area (which range in height from 15 to 40 feet). Last, the proposed project would be consistent with the recreational intent of the site, and would comply with the existing OS land use designation and P-QP zoning for the site. With implementation of the recommended Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and the Town's Municipal Code, including compliance with the Town's Design Review process, long-term impacts pertaining to the degradation of character/quality would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

LIGHT AND GLARE

AES-4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD GENERATE ADDITIONAL LIGHT AND GLARE BEYOND EXISTING CONDITIONS.

Impact Analysis: Light pollution (also known as photopollution or luminous pollution) refers to light that people find annoying or harmful. Because not everyone is irritated by the same lighting sources, light pollution has a measure of subjectivity. It is common for one person's light "pollution" to be light that is desirable for another. Light trespass occurs when unwanted light enters one's property, for instance, by shining over a neighbor's fence. A common light trespass problem occurs when a strong light enters the window of one's home from outside, causing problems such as sleep deprivation or the blocking of an evening view.

Glare is the result of excessive contrast between bright and dark areas in the field of view and is primarily a road safety issue, as bright and/or badly shielded lights around roads may partially blind drivers or pedestrians unexpectedly. There are three types of glare: blinding glare, which is

completely blinding and leaves temporary vision deficiencies; disability glare, which describes such effects as being blinded by automobile headlights, thus causing a significant reduction in sight capabilities; and discomfort glare, which does not typically cause a dangerous situation in itself, and is mostly annoying and irritating.

Short-Term Construction Lighting

Short-term light and glare impacts associated with construction activities would likely be limited to nighttime lighting (for security purposes) in the evening hours. In accordance with Chapter 15.08.020 (hours of working) in the Town's Municipal Code, operations allowed under a building permit would be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Work hours on Sundays and Town recognized holidays would be limited to the hours between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and permitted only with the approval of the building official or designee. Thus, construction activities would be required to cease no later than 8:00 p.m. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-3, all construction-related nighttime security lighting, if necessary, would be oriented downward and away from adjacent residential areas. Lighting would consist of the minimal wattage necessary to provide safety at the construction site. As these impacts would only last until 8:00 p.m., and would cease upon completion of construction, with compliance with Mitigation Measure AES-3, impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Long-Term Operational Lighting

Currently, light and glare sources are nominal at the project site (one exterior security light on the Mammoth Creek Park West bathroom facility). Street lighting and pedestrian lighting along Old Mammoth Road to the north and south of the project site are also present. Lighting in the surrounding area occurs as a result of commercial and residential exterior security lighting, and interior lighting sources at the condominiums to the north, southwest, and west of the project site. No traffic signal lighting currently exists adjoining the project site; however, as noted above, pedestrian safety lighting is present along Old Mammoth Road.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased lighting at the project site compared to existing conditions. The proposed structures would include increased exterior security/pedestrian lighting, and interior lighting from the proposed structure. The proposed project would be required to comply with the Municipal Code Section 17.36.030, *Exterior Lighting*. An outdoor lighting plan would be required to be submitted in conjunction with the application for design review approval. The plan would be required to show that all outdoor lighting fixtures are designed, located, installed, aimed downward or toward structures, retrofitted if necessary, and maintained in order to prevent glare, light trespass, and light pollution. Outdoor lighting installations must be designed to avoid harsh contrasts in lighting levels between the project site and the adjacent properties. With compliance with the Town's Municipal Code, impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Development of the project would construct a large roof structure to cover the proposed ice rink, which could cause increased daytime glare. The project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measure AES-4, which would require a non-reflective finish to be applied to building materials, including the roof structure. Compliance with Mitigation Measure AES-4 would ensure

that nearby viewers are not exposed to substantial daytime glare and impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

The project may also include photovoltaic and/or solar panels along the south-facing pitch of the roof that could cause glare. However, glare from photovoltaic panels would be minimal, as these systems absorb light rather than reflect it. Therefore, potential increased glare impacts resulting from the photovoltaic panels would not result in significant glare impacts onto surrounding sensitive uses.

Mitigation Measures:

- AES-3 All construction-related lighting fixtures (including portable fixtures) shall be oriented downward and away from adjacent residential areas. Lighting shall consist of the minimal wattage necessary to provide safety at the construction site. A construction safety lighting plan shall be submitted to the Community and Economic Development Manager for review concurrent with Grading Permit application.
- AES-4 Prior to issuance the Building Permit, the Town shall identify on the building plans that potential reflective building materials (e.g., the roof and windows) shall use a non-reflective finish.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative impacts discussed below rely upon the list of cumulative development projects in Table 4-1, *Cumulative Projects List*, Section 4.0, *Basis of Cumulative Analysis*, of this EIR. The analysis below discloses the cumulative impacts from those projects listed in Table 4-1, and the proposed project's contribution to that cumulative impact. The nearest cumulative projects to the project site in Table 4-1 are the Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project (which adjoins the project site to the northeast), Snowcreek VIII project (located as close as 350 feet to the south), and Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project (located approximately 450 feet south); refer to Exhibit 4-1, *Cumulative Projects Map*.

SHORT-TERM VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY

- **PROJECT CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES, COMBINED WITH CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES FOR OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD TEMPORARILY DEGRADE THE VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

Impact Analysis: As noted above, the nearest cumulative projects to the project site include the Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project, and the Snowcreek VIII project. It is unknown at this time when these projects would be constructed. Construction staging areas, truck hauling, and grading activities may be conducted at these cumulative project sites. Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project has undergone the design review process and would still need to obtain

appropriate building/grading permits. The Snowcreek VIII project would be subject to approval through the design review process set forth by the PEDC. All grading and earthwork activities would be required to be conducted in accordance with an approved construction grading plan and grading permit issued by the Mammoth Lakes Public Works Department. Thus, construction impacts from these cumulative projects would be lessened through the Town's design review and permitting processes. The Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts pertaining to the degradation of character/quality during construction, as this is a trail improvement project and would not involve substantial disturbance activities. Thus, overall cumulative impacts would occur during construction activities. However, with implementation of existing Town standards and regulations during construction, these cumulative impacts would be reduced.

Per Impact Statement AES-1, project construction activities could result in short-term visual degradation at the project site due to staging equipment, soil piles, truck hauling, etc. However, project construction activities are considered to be short-term and would cease upon project completion. In addition, Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 (requiring staging area screening and a construction hauling plan) would reduce short-term construction impacts to a less than significant level. Thus, the proposed project would not significantly cumulatively contribute to the degradation of character/quality during construction.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure AES-1 and AES-2.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

SCENIC VIEWS AND VISTAS

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON A SCENIC VISTA.**

Impact Analysis: Two cumulative projects (Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion and Snowcreek VIII) are located within the viewshed of the project site. Upon construction of these cumulative projects, new structures could increase public view blockage to the visual resources to the south (the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Crest) and west (Mammoth Mountain). Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project has already undergone the Town's Design Review process to ensure that no significant impacts regarding public view blockage has occurred. The Snowcreek VIII project would be required to be analyzed as part of the Town's Design Review process to minimize impacts regarding public view blockage as well. The Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project would not result in view blockage, as this is a trail improvement project.

As discussed in Impact Statement AES-2, the proposed project would maintain the existing designated scenic views along Old Mammoth Road, the Loop Trail, and Mammoth Creek Park West, resulting in less than significant impacts to scenic views. Thus, although cumulative development may increase view blockage to visual resources as seen from scenic views and vistas, the proposed project would not cumulatively contribute to a substantial visual impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LONG-TERM VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD DEGRADE THE VISUAL CHARACTER/QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

Impact Analysis: Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project has already undergone the Town's Design Review process to ensure compatibility with the surrounding character/quality. However, the specific design details for the Snowcreek VIII project is unknown at this time. This cumulative project's impacts to visual character would be dependent upon project- and site-specific variables, including proximity to visually sensitive receptors, the visual sensitivity of the respective development sites, and the compatibility of a project's architectural style, scale, and setbacks with the surrounding land uses. The potential impacts of this cumulative project on the visual character of the development site and its surroundings would be subject to the Town's Design Guidelines and would be enforced through the Town's Design Review process set forth by the PEDC. This process would ensure compliance with the Town's desired architectural styles, color schemes, materials, etc. for that specific area. The Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts pertaining to the degradation of character/quality during operations, as this is a trail improvement project.

As discussed in Impact Statement AES-3, implementation of proposed project would result in less than significant impacts pertaining to the degradation of character/quality upon compliance with the Municipal Code and the recommended Mitigation Measure BIO-1. Thus, cumulative impacts to long-term character/quality would be less than significant, and the proposed project would not significantly contribute to cumulative long-term visual impacts.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures BIO-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

LIGHT AND GLARE

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD CUMULATIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO SIGNIFICANT LIGHT/GLARE IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Development of cumulative projects could result in increased lighting in the Town. The impacts related to light and glare from the nearest cumulative project would be dependent upon project- and site-specific variables, including proximity to visually sensitive receptors and the visual sensitivity of the respective development sites. The potential impacts of the Mammoth Creek Inn Expansion project, Snowcreek VIII project, Mammoth Creek Gap Closure Project, and other projects related to light and glare would be evaluated on a project-by-project

basis. Potential increased lighting impacts would be minimized through compliance with Municipal Code Section 17.36.030, on a project-by-project basis, which would ensure proper lighting fixtures, placement, and minimal spillover.

As discussed in Impact Statement AES-4, the project's short-term construction lighting impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the recommended Mitigation Measure AES-3. Thus, the project would not result in a substantial cumulative contribution to light and glare during construction. Further, compliance with the Town's Municipal Code, Section 17.36.030, would minimize the project's lighting impacts to less than significant levels. Last, compliance with Mitigation Measure AES-4 would reduce the project's potential for increased daytime glare to less than significant levels as well. With implementation of the Municipal Code and Mitigation Measures AES-3 AES-4, the project would not cumulatively contribute to the creation of substantial new lighting or glare and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures AES-3 and AES-4.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.2.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No unavoidable significant impacts related to aesthetics/light and glare have been identified following implementation of mitigation measures referenced in this section.



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