

Town Council Draft

Final Proof 15 November

Mammoth Lakes Recreation

A Vision for Recreation in Mammoth Lakes and a Strategic Plan for Its Implementation



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Funding and Support Services

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rec·re·a·tion

Refreshment of strength and spirit

Webster

Project Overview

Project Goal:

The following statement was represented to the community of Mammoth Lakes by John Wentworth, CEO/Board President of the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA), during public comment at the July 7, 2010, Town Council meeting.



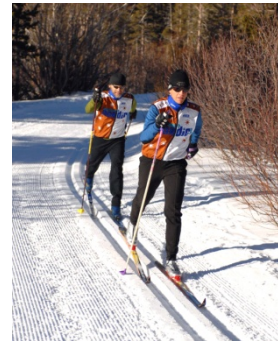
Photo: Christian Pondella

“The Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) proposes to convene a process to benefit the community of Mammoth Lakes and those agencies, commissions, stakeholders and user groups with an interest in recreation in the Mammoth Lakes region. This facilitated process will work to articulate a vision for recreation in Mammoth Lakes and a strategic plan for its implementation. This process is consistent with the ‘Recreation Vision and Policy Development’ document as previously submitted to the Town Council. It is anticipated that this process will benefit interagency collaboration, direct the development of recreation infrastructure in the region and may be used to inform the strategic implementation of both Measures R and U.

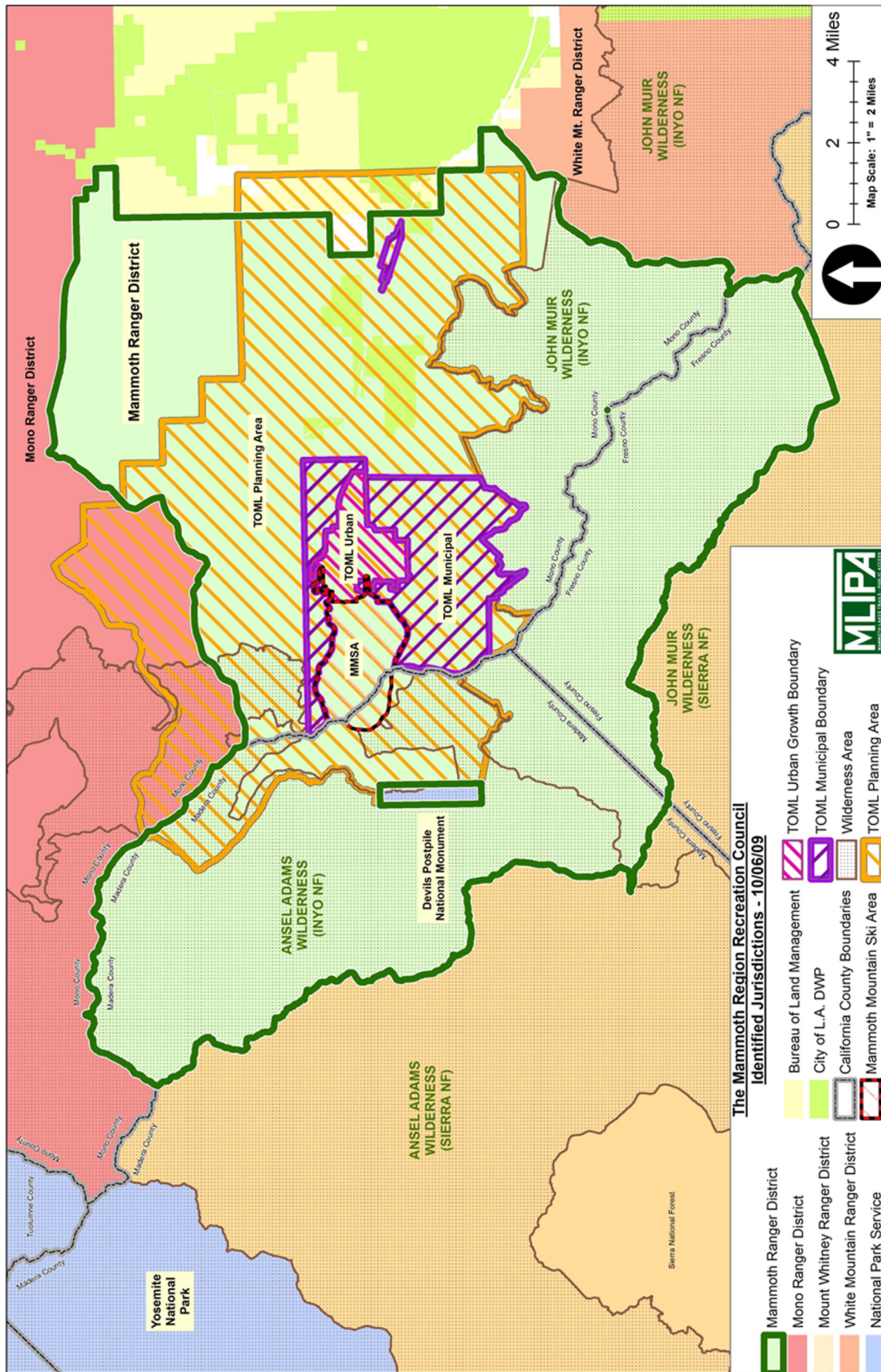
“MLTPA appreciates the need for this process to get underway in a timely manner and to have work completed expeditiously. With this in mind, MLTPA is setting a project timeline goal of approximately three months.”

At the same Town Council meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Jo Bacon and Council member Rick Wood volunteered to serve as the Town Council’s representatives to the process, which has subsequently come to be known as RECSTRATS.

On July 21, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve the intention of the above and to participate in the RECSTRATS process, as identified by MLTPA, through the Town Council Recreation Reorganization Committee.



Mammoth Lakes Region of the Inyo National Forest



Situation Analysis - Where We Have Come From

Mammoth Lakes is an alpine recreation destination in the Eastern Sierra completely surrounded by the Inyo National Forest. Residents and visitors alike have been recreating in and around Mammoth for decades, accessing the public lands for diverse recreation activities. With the Town's incorporation, there was the development of municipal recreation facilities including parks and trails. While there was general acknowledgement of the value recreation brought to the community, from both a quality-of-life and an economic-sustainability perspective, there hadn't been a focused effort to enhance and expand the recreation experience in Mammoth Lakes.



In June 2008, the voters of Mammoth Lakes approved Measure R, a special sales-tax increase of 1/2%, which required a 2/3-plus-one vote to pass, for the specific benefit of trails, parks and recreation. This tax measure provided a new and reliable funding source for improving Mammoth's recreation infrastructure and illustrated the community's passion for recreation. The Town's Recreation Commission, then known as the Tourism and Recreation Commission, was given the task of overseeing

the Measure R project-funding process.

With the economic downturn beginning in the fall of 2008, the Town began experiencing revenue shortfalls that led to budget cuts in a variety of service and staffing areas. In the summer of 2009 the Town was in the process of forming Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT), a non-governmental destination-marketing organization. The formation of MLT led to a recommendation to reorganize the Town's Tourism and Recreation Department and eliminate the director's position as a budget-savings step. After consideration, the position was not eliminated; however, the issue did raise the question about the Town's priority for recreation. A group of stakeholders was convened to address the Town's recreation reorganization. This process was labeled the Mammoth Region Recreation Council (MRRC).



MRRC was a facilitated process and included representatives from the Inyo National Forest (INF), Friends of the Inyo, Mono County, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) and the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML), including Council members, Tourism and Recreation commissioners and staff. MRRC explored many concepts for recreation reorganization and introduced an idea to consider outsourcing some recreation programming, management and development to a non-governmental entity while still maintaining capacity to deliver core municipal recreation facilities. Town Council expressed support for this concept and an expanded group of stakeholders was convened to further explore the idea and conduct an initial feasibility review. This process was called Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR).

MLR was also a facilitated process and included MRRC participants as well as representatives from key user groups and expanded Town staff. MLR further explored the fiduciary responsibilities of the jurisdictional partners (TOML/INF) and identified responsibilities that could potentially be outsourced. Within the framework of MLR, there was an additional concept for reorganization presented by participating Council members and Town staff. The Tourism and Recreation Commission also developed a recommendation for reorganization and presented their concept to the Town Council during a joint

workshop in May 2010. All of the concepts presented were intended to inform the budget process for FY2010–11.



Photo: Christian Pondella

While the Town government was considering its recreation reorganization, in June 2010 the voters of Mammoth Lakes approved Measure U, an extension of the utility user tax—and, like Measure R, a special initiative requiring a 2/3-plus-one vote to pass—for the specific benefit of mobility, recreation and arts and culture. This voter initiative further established the community’s support for recreation and its willingness to begin developing a sustainable future through infrastructure improvements and enhancements.

In July 2010 the Town Council accepted an offer by MLTPA to finance a facilitated process for completing the MRRC/MLR recreation-reorganization process. The Town Council appointed community members and staff to a Recreation Strategies (RECSTRATS) steering committee with the direction to deliver a recreation vision and strategy for Mammoth Lakes while also identifying opportunities that might be realized by formalizing the Town’s relationship with the Inyo National Forest. This process will be completed by November 2010 with the delivery of the vision and the strategic plan for recreation as articulated in this document to the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

Where We Are Going

In recent years, the emphasis in Mammoth Lakes centered on land use and real estate development. However, with drastic changes in the global economy impacting Mammoth’s real estate development projects, it has become an opportunistic time to develop a collective community vision for recreation and how it drives Mammoth’s tourism-based economy. The community is using this time to refocus its efforts to create economic stability through investing in the recreation experience.

This refocus has been accelerated through significant collaborative planning and implementation efforts between the Town, the Inyo National Forest (INF), local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and interested community members. These collaborations have led to the completion of the Lakes Basin Path, the installation of initial phases of a trail-system signage-and-wayfinding system, the formation of Mammoth Trails, the beginning formation of a sports council and strategic planning efforts in the Sherwins area (Sherwins Area Recreation Plan, or SHARP, document) and Lakes Basin (Lakes Basin Special Study, or LABSS).

Many of these efforts are being driven as a result of a recognized need to strengthen the relationship between the Town and the INF. This relationship is a vital element in RECSTRATS and is being pursued by the Town’s elected leadership along with representatives from the INF. There are many projects that can be shared between the two agencies: for example, sharing equipment and resources for more efficient implementation of prioritized projects. A first step in forming this renewed relationship is to identify common needs and opportunities for sharing resources, which leads to “getting things done.”

Moving forward, RECSTRATS is intended to be a living document that is used to provide direction for improving and enhancing the recreation experience in Mammoth Lakes. It provides the platform for making a difference in how all the respective agencies, leaders and community stakeholders engage in the prioritization and implementation of recreation projects in the region.

Recreation Trends

OVERVIEW

The potential to develop the Mammoth Lakes region of the Inyo National Forest into one of the premier community recreation-activity centers in the nation must be considered within the context of the macro environment, which includes analysis of changing national demographics, the opportunities offered by the public's engagement with environmental issues and the stewardship of public lands, the proliferation of contemporary technology, national and regional economics and federal, state and local government policies with regard to recreation.

Trend Summary

The following is a summary of macro trends as they may impact recreation strategies for the Mammoth Lakes region of the Inyo National Forest.

Trend	Direction	Comments
Demographic	Favorable ↑	Baby Boomers and Gen X providing significant volume of new recreation participants
Environment	Favorable ↑	Support for the environment has increased significantly, as has participation in outdoor recreation and stewardship.
Technology	Neutral ↔	Great way to create awareness for the recreation strategy, but an increasing number of kids and adults are engaged in indoor technology games, reducing time outside.
Economy	Neutral ↔	Economy is weak but should recover. Due to weak economy, region is focusing on recreation strategy as an economic-development tool.
Federal and State Government	Negative ↓	Budgets are strained.
Local Government	Favorable ↑	Measures R and U provide reliable funding for local recreation

A. Key Trends

Demographics

One of the key indicators of the public's future interests in recreation may stem from the changing demographic picture within the state of California, the Mammoth Lakes region's primary source of visitation. There are significant population changes underway that will play an important part in shaping

recreation strategies, including the aging of the Baby Boomer generation. The table below outlines the percentage of trip stays that identified generations had within the state of California.

Generational Segments

Generation Segment	Age Range	% of Trip Stays
Millennials	<30 Years	16%
Gen X	30-45 Years	37%
Baby Boomers	46-64 Years	34%
Silent	65-80 Years	12%
GI	81+ Years	1%

Source: California Travel and Tourism Commission

Combined, the Baby Boomers and Generation X represent 71% of the trip stays within the state of California. And because of improved health and fitness, as well as lifestyle choices being engaged in by the public, other demographics are also participating in recreation activities to much older ages.

Recent census data also shows that rapid change is taking place with regard to the racial and ethnic diversity of the general population of the state of California.

California Population by Ethnic Group
(000's) omitted

	2008	2018	% Change
Hispanic	14,022	17,468	25%
White	15,892	16,394	3%
Black	2,304	2,372	3%
Asian or Other	4,995	5,841	17%
Two or More Races	934	923	-1%
	38,148	42,998	13%

Source: Center for the Study of the California Economy

Strategies to engage recreation opportunities and amenities within the Mammoth Lakes region of the Inyo National Forest will need to take into account changes to both the demography and ethnic diversity of the state of California, and to proactively plan for future recreation needs.

Environment and Stewardship

Public interest in the outdoors and the natural environment in the state of California, already strong, is increasing. There is a growing awareness and concern expressed by the public for the quality of the natural environment and the sustainability of the relationship between citizens and the natural world. More and more people are actively engaged in recreational pursuits within the natural environment.

And there continues to be an evolution of attitudes regarding the role that local, regional and federal government agencies should play in local recreation planning, with an increasing interest in the role that communities and citizens should play in the stewardship of the natural environment where recreation activities take place. More people seek an active role in environmental protection, recreation and stewardship, which in many communities has manifested itself in the commitment of public resources to environmental preservation and open space, trail programs and facilities funded by ballot measures, as

has been the case in Mammoth Lakes. This interest in stewarding natural assets is beneficial to both the economies of local communities as well as to public lands, such as the Inyo National Forest.

Technology

Technology has created significant opportunities for the enhancement of recreation, especially with its ability to communicate opportunities for experiences, facilities, programs and safety via the Internet. Conversely, contemporary technology has created leisure-time competition for traditional outdoor recreation activities and has been identified as a significant contributing factor in troubling trends of obesity within the United States, especially among children.

This competition for leisure time has set up challenges to traditional recreation activities from new electronics-based recreation such as the Internet, computer-simulated games and sports and sophisticated entertainment media. Within the United States, spectator sports have been on the rise and participative sports on the decline. This creates a need for high-quality outdoor recreation facilities and programming so that outdoor recreation can successfully compete for citizens' time and attention.

Economics

Consumer discretionary funds, which are typically spent on activities like recreation, are under significant pressure given the current state of the national, state and local economies. Difficult economic times are exacerbating equitable access to recreation activities, compounding the growing economic divisions of Americans and putting an added focus on the responsibility of municipalities and agencies to ensure that recreation opportunities and facilities are accessible to all Americans.

Affluent households with more discretionary income have resources available for leisure activities, including travel, recreation and entertainment. The more affluent, as is the case of destination visitors, have access to a broad spectrum of recreation activities. There has also been a documented increase in the proportion of the American population that is considered low income. It is perhaps no coincidence that the local residents of recreation destinations are shouldering difficult economic burdens.

This potential division between affluent visitors, the patrons of recreation destinations and low-income local residents needs to be carefully considered and factored into the development of strategies for the successful implementation of recreation facilities and programs in the Mammoth Lakes region.

It should be noted that many in the Mammoth Lakes community see recreation as an important economic-development strategy with potential benefits to local revenues, taxes and employment. Opportunities to engage recreation as a significant component of local and regional economic activity will need to be considered and fully integrated into developed recreation strategies moving forward.

Government

Fiscal pressures at the federal and state levels have meant reduced funding resources available for recreation development as well as for facility planning and maintenance. These pressures underline the need for all stakeholders and interested parties in the Mammoth Lakes region's recreation community to work together to attract and pursue a dwindling pool of state and federal funding resources.

Local recreation interests, however—specifically the Town and the community of Mammoth Lakes—have significant opportunities to develop, construct, maintain and program recreation capacity due to

the approval of Measures R and U, two special taxes committed to specified uses by law, neither of which contain sunset clauses. Both measures are committed, either wholly or in part, to recreation.

B. Local Area Recreation Participation

The Mono County Visitor Profile¹ offers insight into visitors' participation in existing and available recreation activities.

Visitor Participation in Outdoor Recreation Activities in Mono County by Season (%)

	Total	Summer 2007	Fall 2007	Winter 2008	Spring 2008
Hiking	47.4	65	59.1	6.4	39.7
Fishing	38.7	54.7	39.2	0	44.9
Photography	37.7	34.3	68.5	2.5	41.2
Camping	24.7	46.4	13.9	.5	20.1
Skiing: Downhill	16	0	0	74.8	9.3
Bird Watching	11.8	17.2	15.9	.1	8
Boating/Rowing/Sailing	11.3	19.2	15.9	0	1.9
Bicycle Racing/Riding	10.6	20.7	8.5	.3	3.9
Hot Springs	7.8	15.2	8	.1	1.1
Snowboarding	5.9	0	0	29	1.9
Rock Climbing	5	8.1	4.8	.1	4.1
Horseback Riding/Pack Trip	4.8	10.3	1.4	0	2.9
Skiing: XC/Skating/Telemark	3.3	0	0	11.9	5.2
Kayaking	2.9	6.1	.3	0	3
Golf	2.9	4.3	3	0	2.7
Sledding	1.7	0	0	7.9	1
Snowmobiling	1.5	0	0	7.6	.4
Rock Hounding	1.4	2.5	1.8	0	.4
Off-Road Motor Sports	1.2	.7	2.4	.2	1.6
Snowshoeing	.9	0	0	4.3	.6

Source: Mono County Visitor Profile Study 2008

As can be seen by the table, there is a wide diversity of participation in recreation activities within Mono County. It will be critical for those involved in the implementation of the recreation vision to build upon current recreation participation and develop a focused recreation strategy.

¹ Mono County Visitor Profile Study 2008

Strategic Vision & Guiding Principles

The RECSTRATS Steering Committee developed the following Recreation Vision and Guiding Principles:

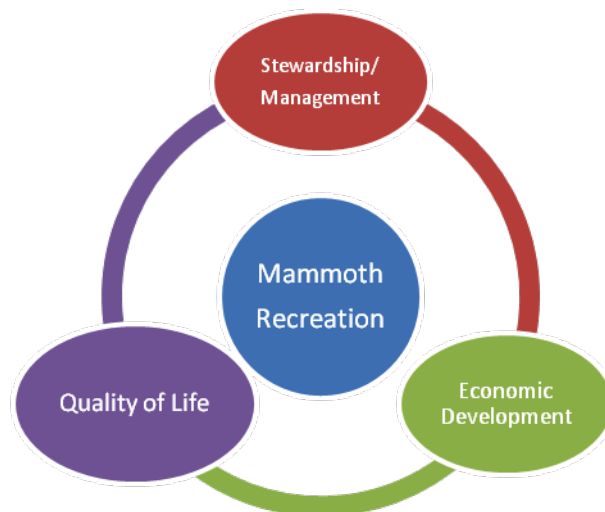
Recreation Vision

“To be the best alpine recreation community in the country.”

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles to achieve the vision include key partners all working together and, in doing so, making the Mammoth Lakes region the best alpine outdoor-recreation community in the United States. These principles are to be used as overarching guidelines when new ideas and priorities are being considered for implementation. The guiding principles include the following:

- 1. Stewardship/Management:** The use of recreation as a stewardship/management tool. From the resource perspective, recreation can serve as a way to manage recreation capacity, including existing and new recreation opportunities. Also, it allows for greater education of the public in their role of resource uses and protection.
- 2. Economic Development:** The use of recreation as an economic-development tool is important to improve and grow the overall local economy. This includes the ability to build upon existing core recreation activities and creates an overall defensible market position of the town of Mammoth Lakes as a recreation destination.
- 3. Quality of Life:** The use of recreation for community enhancement and quality-of-life improvements makes the town of Mammoth Lakes a desirable place to live and serves as a key attractor for business and labor.



Sense of Place and Tangible Elements

The Steering Committee further identified both a sense of place and tangible elements that would give evidence to the achievement and implementation of the vision and strategic plan. In essence, these are desired elements meant to define what Mammoth Lakes looks like when the vision and strategic plan are implemented.

Sense of Place

- Inspiring/adventurous spirit
- Sense of ownership/a special place
- Sense of renewal

Tangible Elements

- World-class high-altitude training center
- Year-round recreation
- Multi-use facilities
- Trail system with signage
- Integrated mobility
- Resources for maintenance
- Trail access/parking

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The Steering Committee developed a comprehensive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis) with regard to recreation in the Mammoth Lakes region.

Identified key areas of opportunity include:

- An overall increased level of awareness of the value of recreation for the community
- A partner relationship between the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Inyo National Forest
- A general wellness trend throughout society
- The potential ability for innovation in a small community and a partner-positive mindset that can create a can-do culture for recreation
- Significant opportunities exist in attracting outside funding, including both private- and public-sector funding.

Mammoth Lakes /Inyo National Forest

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural environment • Isolation • Proximity to Yosemite • Air/highway access • Variety of activities • Quality of the place • Sustainable funding • Community commitment/Passion for recreation 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of vision & sustained effort • Weather • Facility maintenance • Peak weekend experience • Comprehensive/centralized recreation information • Wayfinding • Federal & state funding strategy
<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindset for change • Economic environment • Competition • Inability to get along • Sustainable efforts • Quality of experience • State and federal funding • Unrealistic environmental constraints 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recreation awareness • TOML/USFS leadership core • Demography/Health & wellness trend • Innovation • Outside sponsorship/funding • Leveraging of relationships/opportunities • Partner positive mindset

Strengths

- **Natural Environment:** The town of Mammoth Lakes/Inyo National Forest environment provides an incredible backdrop for all types of recreational activities. Natural beauty and scenic qualities provide a unique and desirable setting.
- **Isolation:** For those seeking solitude, the area can provide an isolated recreation experience just outside the town.
- **Proximity to Yosemite:** The area is located a short distance to one of the best national parks in the country.

- **Air/Highway Access:** The town of Mammoth Lakes is accessible via the Mammoth/Yosemite Airport and all-weather Highway 395.
- **Variety of Activities:** The area provides a variety of outdoor recreational activities.
- **Quality of the Place:** Mammoth Lakes/Inyo National Forest provides a unique sense of place that differentiates the area from others. It contains pristine wilderness combined with a variety of activities.
- **Sustainable Funding:** Recreation has a sustainable funding source with Measure R and part of Measure U. This provides for continuous investment in the recreation experience.
- **Community Commitment/Passion for Recreation:** The local resident population has commitment as evidenced by the passage of two funding measures and the passion (as evidenced by their involvement) for recreation.

Weaknesses

- **Lack of Vision & Sustained Effort:** The pursuit of a comprehensive recreation strategy has been hampered by a lack of vision and sustained effort.
- **Weather:** Weather can be problematic for recreation during winter months, with few indoor recreation activities to provide an outlet for locals and visitors.
- **Facility Maintenance:** Facility maintenance has been challenging to sustain in light of budget conditions and lack of priority for maintenance.
- **Peak Weekend Experience:** The peak winter weekend experience is not the best: crowding is significant and can contribute to an overall diminished experience.
- **Comprehensive/Centralized Recreation Information:** Currently there is not a comprehensive source to provide users with appropriate information on recreational activities.
- **Wayfinding:** Currently there is not a coordinated wayfinding program to inform users on the trail systems and within the TOML's park system and the Inyo National Forest
- **Federal & State Funding Strategy:** The area does not have a state and federal funding strategy that is inclusive of the region.

Threats

- **Mindset for Change:** The local community is challenged in that some residents are not supportive of change. As such it creates a significant challenge to move toward a new vision.
- **Economic Environment:** The current economic environment and the federal, state and local economy are challenged.
- **Competition:** Significant competition for the recreation dollar exists from consumers' own local areas as well as from other competing destinations.
- **Inability to Get Along:** The recreation strategy can be undermined by the local community's inability to coordinate efforts.
- **Sustainable Efforts:** The region's inability to sustain the recreation-strategy effort could undermine its implementation.
- **Quality of Experience:** If not managed properly, the region's quality of experience could be eroded.
- **State and Federal Funding:** Funding sources could be reduced or eliminated given the economic challenges that currently exist at the state and federal levels.
- **Unrealistic Environmental Constraints:** Unrealistic environmental constraints could hamper the recreation strategy.

Opportunities

- Recreation Awareness: The community and local jurisdictional agencies have an increased awareness about the importance of recreation to the local economy and quality of life.
- TOML/INF Leadership Core: Having these two organizations united in their efforts to improve the quality of recreation provides a unique opportunity for the implementation of the recreation strategy.
- Demography/Health & Wellness Trend: As Baby Boomers age “younger” and a new generation gets older, combined with a strong “wellness” trend, recreation is a key motivator for travel.
- Innovation: The small size of the region should facilitate quicker decision-making and innovation of new and improving recreation activities.
- Outside Sponsorship/Funding: A recreation strategy can create outside sponsorship/funding opportunities to provide ancillary funding. Sources could include both private sector as well as public sector, including federal and state sources.
- Leveraging (Tipping Point): Implementation of a recreation strategy can provide a unique leveraging opportunity. As programs are implemented, new potential partners and resources may emerge that can help to sustain the effort.
- Partner-Positive Mindset: By having a mindset that is open and willing to engage new partners, potential synergies and opportunities can emerge that will also sustain the recreation strategy.

Clearly the community must overcome the weaknesses and the threats that could impact their vision, but given the need and focus of these efforts the potential upside reward is compelling. The ability to clearly differentiate the destination as well as improve the overall quality of life for local residents places a premium on the success of the recreation vision and strategy.

Key Organizational Resources

The implementation of the recreation strategy is based on the available organizational resources. In the case of the Mammoth Lakes/Inyo National Forest region there are four core groups that have different roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Recreation Strategic Plan and delivery of the recreation vision. This includes the following:

Governmental Agencies

- The Town of Mammoth Lakes provides management of municipal recreation as well as staffing for the development of its recreational infrastructure. The Town of Mammoth Lakes also has an appointed Recreation Commission that serves as an advisory body to the elected Town Council on recreation issues and the recommendations on the disbursement of Measure R funds.
- The United States Forest Service is the primary land-management agency for the Inyo National Forest. The agency provides a wide variety of recreational experiences and overall management of the natural resources.
- Other government agencies

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): A number of organizations provide capacity and funding resources for recreation interests in the region. They include:

- Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA): Provides a local source of funding for the Inyo National Forest.
- Friends of the Inyo: Provides on-the-ground stewardship of the outdoor environment.
- Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation: Provides ongoing support for youth and downhill ski and snowboard programs.
- Mammoth Lakes Foundation: Provides support of arts and cultural activities.
- Mammoth Lakes Tourism: Serves as the destination-marketing organization for the destination.
- Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation: Provides support for trails within the Mammoth Lakes region.

The Private Sector: This includes businesses that provide recreational experiences on public land as well as private-sector recreation providers of facilities, equipment and programming.

User Groups: Includes those local groups that use recreation facilities as well as provide support for the activities they participate in. Examples include, but are not limited to, the High Sierra Striders, Mammoth Trails, the Mammoth Sharks Swim Team, Eastern Sierra Nordic Ski Association, Sierra Cycling Foundation, the High Sierra Triathlon Club and Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre.

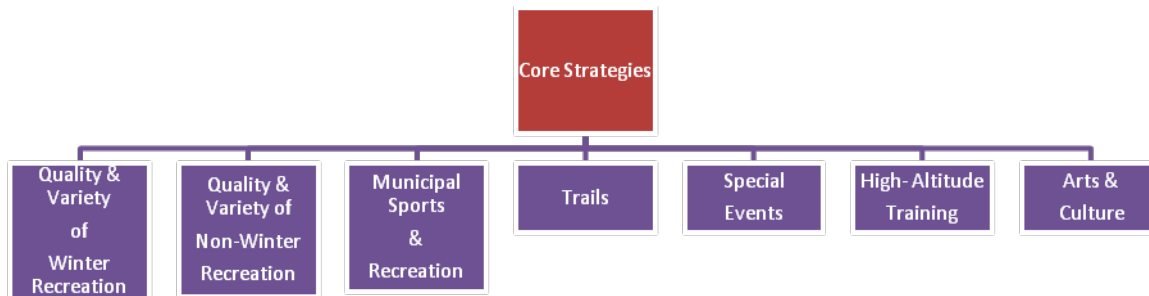
Combined and working together, these agencies and organizations provide unique and needed resources to implement the recreation vision and strategic plan. It is only by this willingness to work together that each of these resource areas can be maximized and leveraged.

Core Strategies

In an effort to implement the recreation strategic plan and achieve the vision, the RECSTRATS Steering Committee identified seven core strategies that, once implemented, will make Mammoth Lakes and the surrounding Inyo National Forest one of the best regions for recreation in the country.

In developing the seven core strategies it is possible for anyone within the community to find a place for their recreation interest/passion and for that person or organization to be a part of delivering the overall recreation vision, and benefit from the effort. For example, if you are a world-class athlete, your interest and passion can be found in the High-Altitude Training strategy. If children's programming is a priority, your interests can be found in the Municipal Sports and Recreation strategy.

Recreation Core Strategies



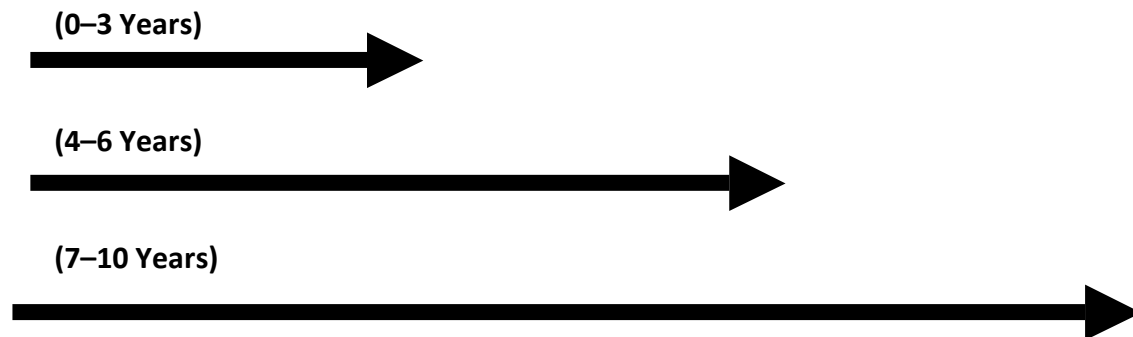
1. **Highest-Quality Winter Recreation Activities:** To provide the highest quality and variety of winter recreation activities for both local residents and visitors.
2. **Highest-Quality Non-Winter Recreation Activities:** To provide the highest quality and variety of non-winter recreation activities for both local residents and visitors.
3. **Municipal Sports and Recreation:** To provide local residents with high-quality recreation facilities and diverse programming that can lead to an improved quality of life.
4. **Trails:** To develop, maintain and program the highest-quality integrated trail system.
5. **Special Events:** To provide infrastructure, logistics and facilitation support for regional recreation-based special events.
6. **High-Altitude Training:** To develop the Mammoth Lakes region as one of the premier high-altitude summer and winter sports training centers.
7. **Art & Culture:** To provide infrastructure, logistics and facilitation support for regional arts and culture.

Action Steps

Overview

The following are initial action steps identified by the RECSTRATS Steering Committee that will be needed to implement each of the identified core strategies. In considering the core strategies it is important to keep in mind the following:

- These action steps are general in nature and are not specifically prioritized.
- The organizations listed are intended to be the “lead” organizations.
- Implementation Timeline
 - The timeline for the implementation of the strategic vision includes short-term, medium-term and long-term tasks and the timelines provided are estimates only. It should be noted that the implementation of medium- and long-term action steps may be simultaneous to short-term action steps. For example, it may be necessary to start elements of medium- and long-term tasks (i.e., planning and feasibility) to be completed in the short term. It should also be noted that these timelines could be accelerated based on community support, identification of funding sources and the potential to be leveraged as part of another strategy.



- Within each of the seven core strategies are overarching action steps that need to be considered as specific efforts are developed and pursued. Those overarching action steps include:
 - **Sustainable Funding Sources:** Identify and secure funding through a variety of resources including local, state and federal agencies, private-sector investment and grant opportunities.
 - **Partnership Development:** Ongoing development of partnerships in order to leverage limited resources (financial and human)
 - **Transportation/Mobility:** The ability to access recreation areas and activities in a timely, safe and convenient manner is imperative to an enhanced recreation experience for residents and visitors alike.

Core Strategy 1 - Provide the highest quality and variety of winter recreation.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Quality and Variety of Winter Recreation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued improvement of the alpine and backcountry experience ▪ Work with INF for ongoing improvement of existing and innovation of new activities 	INF/PS	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development and access for snowplay areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides recreation access for non-skiing/boarding interests 	INF/TOML	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued and ongoing incremental improvement of the snowmobile experience 	ALL	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of the biathlon facility, including target range and stadium (biathlon facility is also a part of the high-altitude training destination strategy) 	PS/UG/INF/TOML	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued development of the Nordic system, including cross-country and snowshoe experiences 	ALL	4–6

Legend: UG=User Group, INF=Inyo National Forest, TOML=Town of Mammoth Lakes, PS=Private Sector, NGO=Non-Governmental Organizations

Timeline=0–3 Years, 4–6 years, 7–10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 2 - Provide the highest quality and variety of non-winter recreation.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Quality and Variety of Non-Winter Recreation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Road cycling (bike lanes/routes): new, and maintenance of existing, trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact Caltrans for education and integration into their work plan 	TOML/UG Caltrans	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mountain bike (soft-surface trails) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with INF to identify new, and maintenance of existing, trails 	INF/UG/NGO	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fish stocking/enhancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing support of fish enhancement to provide a quality experience 	TOML/ Dept. of Fish and Game	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Golf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing improvement of the golf experience 	PS	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing improved access to public lands and high-use recreation areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify potential improved access areas 	INF/NGO/UG	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate access and enhanced experiences for both motorized and non-motorized activities on the Inyo National Forest 	USFS	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-use facility/indoor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Year-round facility also supports high-altitude training strategy 	TOML/UG	7–10

Legend: UG=User Group, INF=Inyo National Forest, TOML=Town of Mammoth Lakes, PS=Private Sector, NGO=Non-Governmental Organizations

Timeline=0–3 Years, 4–6 years, 7–10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 3 - Provide the highest quality and variety of municipal recreation.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Municipal Recreation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low-income access and recreation programming (low-income access to be provided through grants and subsidy of private sector) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify low-income recreation needs ▪ Potential sources include Measure R or U funds/private-sector donations 	TOML/PS	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete existing parks and recreation facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on completion of existing projects in an effort to better serve the local community and build support for future projects 	TOML/UG	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the development of needed meeting space as a facilitator of recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting space will be developed by the private sector but can play a role in the recreation strategy by providing space for meetings, conferences and exhibits 	TOML/PS	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development and maintenance of tennis facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of tennis facilities for visitor and local use 	TOML/UG	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase number and maintenance of multi-use sports fields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update capital facilities plan ▪ Also the addition of an indoor multi-use facility to augment outdoor facilities (basketball, volleyball, etc.) 	TOML/UG	7–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of an aquatic facility (aquatic center is used for water-based sports and can also be used to support high-altitude training) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/UG/PS	7–10

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 Timeline=0–3 Years, 4–6 years, 7–10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 4 - Provide a world-class summer and winter trail system.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Trails		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of Trail System Master Plan, Sherwins Area Recreation Plan and Lakes Basin master plan for ongoing development and management of key recreation areas in the region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing communication and support 	ALL	0-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wayfinding and signage program to inform users (wayfinding is important for user information and an enhanced experience) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of wayfinding program 	TOML	0-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify winter and summer uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with INF and user groups to identify seasonal trail uses 	INF/TOML/NGO/UG	0-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trail awareness (communication about trails, including traditional and technological platforms, to both local residents and visitors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership with the public and private sectors and Mammoth Lakes Tourism 	ALL	0-3

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 NGO=Non-Governmental Organizations
 Timeline=0-3 Years, 4-6 years, 7-10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 5 - Support the highest quality and variety of special events.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Special Events		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equipment (stage, seating, barricades etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify needs and rental uses/procedures, etc. ▪ Production assistance/coordination/facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ease the community planning and implementation processes so as to encourage innovation and new events 	TOML/UG All	0-3 0-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indoor venues (conference facilities, field house) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/UG	4-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outdoor venues (multiple venues, multi-use venues, amphitheatre concert/theater production) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/INF/UG	4-6

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Timeline=0-3 Years, 4-6 years, 7-10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 6 - Become a world-class high-altitude training center.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - High-Altitude Training		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and Implement a new all-weather track and field facility (track development is for non-winter-sports training) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/ UG	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the completion of the Mammoth Lakes Trail System. Trails are important for year-round training and recreation activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to support agencies’ capacity to complete and adopt the plans for implementation 	NGO/UG/INF/TOML	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work to support the development of ancillary sports medicine to support high-altitude training and attraction of world-class athletes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify key partners for the development of sports-medicine initiative and develop strategic plan including hospital participation ▪ Establish sports-medicine education programs, including degrees in sports training, nutrition, management and medicine, at the college and classes at the high school. Additionally, seminars and conferences focused on the same should be developed along with support facilities (labs, testing, classrooms, etc.). 	PS/UG	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the development of needed meeting space as a facilitator of recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting space will be developed by the private sector but can play a role in the recreation strategy by providing space for meetings, conferences and exhibits 	PS	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieve official designation as a high-altitude training center (designation is key for awareness by world-class athletes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop plan for designation, including key elements and criteria as well as responsibilities 	UG	7–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of a new aquatic center to be used for water-based sports and to support municipal recreation for local users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/UG/PS	7–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a multi-sport facility/field house for non-summer-season training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	TOML/UG	7–10

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Timeline=0–3 Years, 4–6 years, 7–10 Years, 10+ Years

Core Strategy 7 - Support the highest quality and variety of arts and culture.

	Organizations	Proposed Timeline
Strategy - Arts & Culture		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public art <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase awareness of public art programs and benefits ▪ Public and private locations ▪ Encourage private business to develop and implement public art 	TOML/PS	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arts and cultural strategic plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for area cultural arts 	TOML/UG	0–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Museums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance existing and develop new ▪ Consider a “Museum of the Eastern Sierra” that includes historical and cultural elements of the region 	UG/PS/TOML/INF	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performing-arts facility (multi-use for both local and visitor use) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activities include facility planning, fundraising and facility development 	NGO/PS/TOML	7–10

Legend: UG=User Group, INF=Inyo National Forest, TOML=Town of Mammoth Lakes, PS=Private Sector, NGO=Non-Governmental Organizations

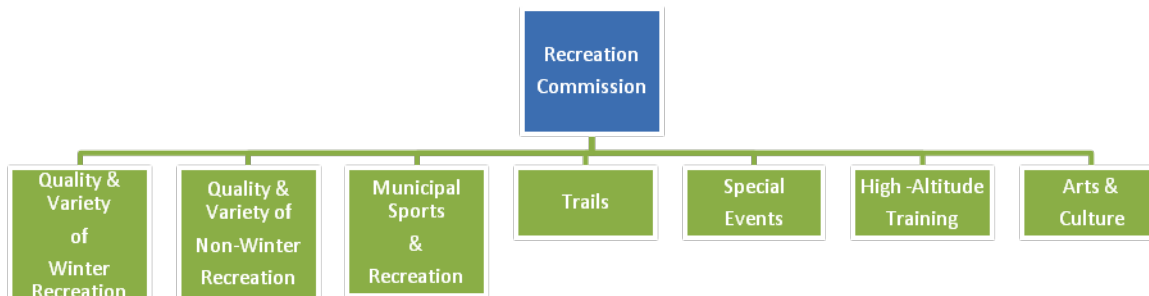
Timeline=0–3 Years, 4–6 years, 7–10 Years, 10+ Years

Implementation Recommendations

A. Organizational Implementation

As previously mentioned in this plan, it is crucially important for the government agencies, organizations, user groups and the private sector to collaborate with one another to implement each of the core strategies' action-plan items. Listed below are recommendations for how these collaborations might work for implementation:

1. Given that the Inyo National Forest and the Town of Mammoth Lakes are responsible for a significant number of action-plan elements within the core strategies, it is critical that their relationship is formalized and a true partnership be developed. This relationship can be formalized in a number of ways, including a Memorandum of Understanding or Cooperative Agreement. The process for formalizing this relationship is being led by the Town Council's Recreation Reorganization Committee. This process is a top priority for immediate implementation given the number of timely projects potentially to be pursued between the two agencies.
2. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Recreation Commission should play an important role in the implementation of the action-plan steps. The Commission should consider forming seven subcommittees, each one representing a core strategy outlined in this plan (see below).



Each of the subcommittees can provide community members, user groups and other interested parties a “slot” for developing the necessary steps for implementation of the core strategy they have an interest in pursuing. The Recreation Commission can serve as the guiding advisory body to prioritize the core strategies and coordinate the different action-plan steps found within the strategies. The Recreation Commission could also consider having each member of the commission (seven members) chair a subcommittee so as to provide clear and effective communication between the subcommittees and the commission. This recommendation will also allow the Recreation Commission to integrate prioritized core strategies into the Measure R funding process. It is also a consideration to have outside sources and organizations chair the subcommittees.

It is acknowledged that each of the established subcommittees develop their own formal plans to detail the steps necessary to implement each existing or new action-plan step.

3. Establish policy-level direction for sustainable and prioritized implementation of projects (including events and programs) to realize the recreation strategy and vision. The Recreation Commission could manage this effort through a subcommittee of commissioners, RECSTRATS Steering Committee members and appointed community members supported by staff and take the policy to the Town Council for approval. The direction would intend to establish how decision makers would make the difficult choices as to what recreation projects and initiatives will be given priority for implementation. Resources for implementation are limited and projects will need to line up for access to those resources in a responsible manner. This direction should also consider the other processes already in place, such as the CIP Five-Year Plan, Measure R funding and CFFC/Resort Investment Criteria, and strive to link those efforts into an overarching policy for all to follow.
4. It is critical that each of the agencies/organizations integrate the recreation core strategies into their ongoing work plan based on respective fiduciary responsibilities and missions. Listed below are suggestions for engaging the identified key organizational resources in the implementation of the Recreation Vision and Strategy.
 - Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML): The TOML has the responsibility and ability for developing and maintaining existing municipal facilities. It serves as a funding source for the development of enhanced and new recreation facilities through tax revenues, fees and grants. It has staffing and equipment capacity to leverage with potential partners.
 - Inyo National Forest (INF): The INF is the manager of the primary public lands surrounding Mammoth Lakes, and as such their involvement in and integration of the overall Recreation Vision and Strategy is critical. It is recommended that the INF consider how best to integrate their needs with the Town of Mammoth Lakes and other agencies and organizations. It is clear that many of the action-plan items within the core strategies will fall into the primary responsibility of the INF, so it is critical that effective and ongoing communication between the respective partners of the INF be developed. A technical committee comprised of INF staff, TOML staff, Town Council and Recreation Commission representatives, along with key user groups and NGOs, could be formed. This committee could meet annually to establish priorities and identify shared resources for respective work plans and budgets.
 - Private Sector: The private sector plays an important role in the implementation of the recreation vision. Those entities working on public lands under special-use permits with the Inyo National Forest need to continue working with the agency to upgrade their recreation experiences as well as develop ongoing stewardship of the environment. Those private entities not on public lands can look to form partnerships with the public sector for potential development opportunities of facilities and programs.
 - User Groups: User groups also have an important role to play in the implementation of the recreation vision because of their ongoing and constant interface with the recreation

experience. Given the real-time interface with their respective activities, these groups are well positioned to provide input as to the current experience and future needs of recreation facilities and programs. Key is the ability for user groups to effectively channel their efforts into the implementation of the overall strategic vision. Working through the recommended subcommittees should provide an excellent opportunity for user groups to address current issues and future needs while also providing collaborative efforts for delivering those needs.

- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): NGOs provide an excellent resource for the implementation of the recreation vision and strategy. Whether it's issues related to stewardship or the development of specific recreation facilities and activities, NGOs can help marshal the resources and focus needed to continually improve and innovate the recreation experience. NGOs can also serve in an advocacy role for community-based efforts. In some cases NGOs may serve as an implementation and capacity arm for the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Inyo National Forest or the private sector. During this time of budgetary constraints, NGOs can provide cost- efficient and -effective services and technical support for their partners.

5. It is critical that each of the agencies/ organizations establish ongoing communication with each other in an effort to strategically align work plans in order to maximize the limited resources (financial and human) and leverage each other's efforts.

B. Technology

A technology platform can serve primarily as a communication tool in implementing the recreation vision and strategy. It's imperative for all (Town of Mammoth Lakes, INF, non-governmental organizations, private sector and user groups) to consider the use of online, social media and mobile technology to educate and create awareness for recreation. A few steps to consider:

- Clearly understand the emerging needs of recreation users and provide sustainable technology solutions for those needs.
- Develop a comprehensive technology plan for the recreation vision and strategy utilizing existing resources while tracking and exploring new resources. Understand the current technology of partners and collaborate on the delivery of shared future needs.

C. Funding

Key to the success of the recreation vision and strategy is funding, and there are potentially several sources of funds that need to be considered.

Funding: Local

At the local level, Measures R and U represent a significant commitment by the local community to recreation, trails, parks, mobility and arts and culture. Measure R generates approximately \$850,000 annually and Measure U about \$900,000. Assuming a reasonable growth rate of 2% annually, the total generated over 10 years is estimated to be approximately \$20 million (see following page).

Estimated Measure R and U Funding

Year	Amount	Cumulative Total
2011	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000
2012	\$1,785,000	\$3,535,000
2013	\$1,820,700	\$5,355,700
2014	\$1,857,114	\$7,212,814
2015	\$1,894,256	\$9,107,070
2016	\$1,932,141	\$11,039,212
2017	\$1,970,784	\$13,009,996
1028	\$2,010,200	\$15,020,196
2019	\$2,050,404	\$17,070,600
2020	\$2,091,412	\$19,162,012

** It should be noted that not all funds collected under Measure U are for recreation exclusively. Funds will be for mobility, recreation and arts and culture.*

It may be beneficial for the Measure U steering process to consider annual funding for projects in the context of short-term, medium-term and long-term. The community needs to develop guidelines for specific percentages of funding for short-term, medium-term and long-term action steps.

Funding: State and Federal

In addition to local funding, there is opportunity to pursue state and federal funding. At the state level, grants such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) as well as BTA and RTP, Proposition 84 and Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant opportunities should be identified and a strategy for acquiring them be developed. This could include the following:

- Working to identify potential recreation/community/transportation grant areas
- Identifying appropriate persons in state government agencies with which to develop appropriate relationships
- Working with elected representatives on a regular basis to articulate community needs and interests that align with political opportunities
- Developing a community-based team to work to develop grant opportunities

At the federal level a similar approach should be pursued. Acquisition of federal funding will require a more refined and strategic process, similar to the one identified for the state level. This process could include:

- Working to identify potential recreation/community/transportation funding areas
- Working with elected representatives to align with funding opportunities through annual budget appropriations and bills such as the Transportation Act
- Forming a local team that develops a comprehensive and collaborative representation of the region's needs in order to pursue federal funding on a regular basis through consistent interaction with federal agencies and elected representatives. This includes

the Department of Agriculture (Inyo National Forest), Department of the Interior (National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management), Federal Highway Administration and the Department of Commerce.

Additionally, the local community should work to support increased federal funding available for the Inyo National Forest. While the INF is prohibited from politically lobbying for funds, the community is not restricted. As such, it is important for the INF and the broader community to work together to lobby to secure additional funding through the federal government funding channels such as fee recovery and appropriations.

D. Other

In addition to the above recommendations it will be important to continually keep the issue of recreation in the forefront of the community as well as visitors to the region. As such, it is recommended that an ongoing communication plan be developed. This plan could include the following elements:

- Create a “Mammoth Recreation” brand that can be utilized by all of the agencies, NGOs, private sector and user groups that works to unify the recreation theme within the area.
- Recreation Summit: Develop and host an annual recreation summit to inform partners and the community about all things related to the recreation vision and strategy, including new programs, measurement of implemented programs, budget allocations, etc.
- Annual Newsletter: This can be used as a standard piece of collateral to inform the local community, partners and visitors.