



## EAST OPEN SPACE STREAM CORRIDOR PLANNING STUDY

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

AUGUST 1, 2008



# East Open Space Stream Corridor Planning Study

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# *Chapter 1*

## **Executive Summary**

### **Background**

This plan for the East Open Space Stream Corridor is derived from the Town's 2007 General Plan policies that require district planning for Major Land Use Development projects that propose changes to the Zoning Code or General Plan. The Planning Study was initiated in conjunction with The Sherwin project, a land use application that would include amendment of the Zoning Code to allow for clustering of density to build a hotel project up to 77 feet in height. While the project would allow for preservation of the southern part of the site as open space, and respect the open space stream corridor overlay zone, the increased height has raised concerns about scale, compatibility, and private view impacts to neighboring development.

The study area for this planning effort encompasses approximately 45 acres, coincident with the eastern part of the Open Space/Stream Corridor (OSSC) zoning overlay area. Although the General Plan does not define this as a separate district, the Planning Commission determined this to be an appropriate boundary for the planning study, since its focus is the Mammoth Creek corridor and its open space, community character, access and natural resource values.

### **Inclusive Planning Process**

The Town's district planning policy calls for an inclusive public process through a progressive series of community workshops and focus group meetings, illustrated in Figure 1. Accordingly, the Planning Study has so far included three meetings: 1) Issues, Opportunities and Constraints (February 13, 2008); 2) Planning Alternatives (April 30, 2008) and 3) Planning Study Review (August 14, 2008). A fourth workshop will be held to review the final Planning Study. Each set of meetings included a meeting of the Focus Group, a nine person group familiar and concerned with study area issues and a public workshop hosted by The Planning Commission, with participation by members of the Mobility, Tourism and Recreation and Public Arts Commission. At each of the meetings, participation was substantial and comments and input received on various issues. Many comments and concerns were raised about the compatibility of The Sherwin project, and increased intensity of recreational use, with neighboring development. Many participants provided input regarding the preferred character and treatment of the Mammoth Creek open space corridor and access and connectivity issues.

## **Study Area Characteristics and Intent**

The East OSSC Study Area is defined by the Mammoth Creek Corridor and major mobility opportunities along Old Mammoth Road, Minaret Road, and Mammoth Creek. Mammoth Creek Park is a key recreation resource at the eastern end of the Study Area, which transitions from an open, rural character to the west, with expansive views to the Sherwin Range, to the more urbanized uses of the Old Mammoth Road commercial corridor to the east and north. Surrounding development is mostly low-rise condominium developments of two to three stories. The Town's trail system connects to the Study Area, but has significant gaps along this stretch of Old Mammoth Road and Mammoth Creek. The creek's riparian habitat and adjacent wetland meadows, range and mountain landscape are strong and defining visual and natural elements.

Drawing from the General Plan's community character element and policies relevant to Mammoth Creek and from input at the Focus Group meetings and workshops, several themes emerged that guide the intent of the Planning Study. These included preservation of the creek corridor and its scenic, recreational, and natural resources values; maintaining and improving low-key access and connectivity along the creek corridor; maintaining compatibility of new development with existing residential uses; enhancing Mammoth Creek Park as the focus of active recreation and interpretive uses; preserving views to the Sherwin Range; and implementing sensitive, low-key strategies regarding management and restoration of Mammoth Creek.

## **Alternatives**

To determine the recommendations for the Planning Study, three alternatives were developed and presented for review. The alternatives included "Existing Policy/Status Quo" in which future land use and other, limited improvements would occur as allowed under existing plans and policies. In Alternative 2, "Proposed Plans" would include implementation of the currently proposed Snowcreek Master Plan; development of The Sherwin site with the proposed hotel up to 77 feet; and limited improvements at Mammoth Creek Park. Alternative 3 represents a hybrid of the elements from Alternatives 1 and 2. The principle features of Alternative 3 include

a reduced height for The Sherwin to more closely fit within the tree canopy of 65 feet; a series of trail improvements and connections; enhanced management and maintenance along Mammoth Creek; and a higher degree of improvement at Mammoth Creek Park, consistent with the Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan update. Alternative 3 was the preferred plan among the three options presented, although consensus of the focus group was not reached on every one of its characteristics; the major ideas of Alternative 3, with some modifications were carried forward as the basis for the recommended plan concept.

## **Key Recommendations**

The East OSSC Planning Study concludes with a series of key recommendations, including the following:

- **Support clustered development on the north side of Mammoth Creek** for The Sherwin site, with height consistent with the background conifer tree canopy (65 feet) and with building design through architectural elements that steps or transitions to meet lower height buildings to the north and east.
- **Support the concept of a “greater park”** or open space backbone within the Study Area that would have the opportunity to extend beyond the boundaries of Mammoth Creek Park along the Mammoth Creek Stream Corridor. The Plan would emphasize conservation of natural landscape and open space values, and a connected network of open space, transitioning from the most intensive and active uses at Mammoth Creek Park, along Mammoth Creek, and to open space areas beyond.
- **Make safe connections to the wider trail and pedestrian system and bridge gaps in the trail network linking to a range of year-round recreation opportunities** including provision for a safe off-street Main Path, separated from the streets and traffic and threading through the natural setting of the creek corridor, sidewalks along Old Mammoth Road, and support for the concept of cross-country ski trails across the Snowcreek Golf Course.

- Respect the rural, open space character of the Mammoth Creek/ Old Mammoth Road Corridor by maintaining key public views, utilizing appropriate materials and design for signage, trails, landscaping/re-vegetation.
- Implement sensitive and appropriate management and restoration strategies to maintain and improve the natural resource values of Mammoth Creek, including enhanced coordination between the Town, private property owners, resource management agencies and volunteers.



FIGURE 1 – EAST OSSC PLANNING STUDY PROCESS



# *Chapter 2*

## **East Open Space Stream Corridor Planning Study**

### **A. Introduction**

In June 2007 the Mammoth Lakes Town Council adopted a policy which requires “district planning” to be completed in conjunction with any major project requesting a significant legislative change, such as a Zoning Ordinance Amendment, General Plan Amendment, or new Specific Plan or Master Plan. The district planning process and documentation is to be tailored to the type of land use application and the issues under consideration, to address key areas and sites within the community to aid future planning and to provide information that can be used in considering a permit application.

The East Open Space Stream Corridor Planning Study (East OSSC Planning Study), which is the subject of this draft report, was initiated by the project application for The Sherwin, a 189-room condominium hotel. The Sherwin project site is bisected by Mammoth Creek and is located within the Open Space/Stream Corridor overlay zoning district. The project proposes a building of up to 77 feet in height on the north part of the project site and

publicly accessible open space adjacent to and south of Mammoth Creek. While the East OSSC Study Planning Study was initiated by The Sherwin development, its context is broader. In keeping with the Town Council’s policy, the planning study examines a broader geographic area and set of issues relevant to the Study Area. While the planning study does consider the development of The Sherwin project site, it is not intended as a design proposal for The Sherwin development. Instead, it defines a planning framework that may be implemented by The Sherwin project, along with other future projects within the Study Area.

The district planning policy requires the Planning Commission to consider and approve the guidelines, scope of work, and study area boundaries for each district plan. These items, were each considered by the Planning Commission on December 19, 2007, and approved as the framework to guide the planning effort for the East OSSC study area. This planning study has been undertaken in accordance with that approved scope of work, which includes a progressive public process to consider issues, opportunities,

and constraints; alternatives or options for the study area in response to those items; and refinement and creation of plan recommendations based on input from the public, Commissions, staff and the consultant team. The approved boundaries of the study area are illustrated and described below. Guiding principles for the planning study were drawn from the 2007 General Plan, including a subset of the broader characteristics for the broader Snowcreek district, and those described for Mammoth Creek. Relevant policies of the General Plan to the Planning Study, and this Study's relationship to the broader "Mammoth Creek Special Study" outlined in the General Plan are described in Chapter 3 and Appendix A of this report.

The key aims have been identified for the East OSSC Planning Study include:

- Provide analysis and study for the eastern part of the Mammoth Creek corridor to assist with the evaluation of The Sherwin project application
- Provide opportunities for public input about planning issues concerning the eastern part of the Mammoth Creek Corridor



- Develop recommendations for the ways to enhance access, connectivity, user experience, and natural resource values along the Mammoth Creek corridor that respect this key community asset.

## B. District Planning

In June 2007 the Mammoth Lakes Town Council adopted a policy which requires "district planning" to be completed in conjunction with any major project requesting a significant legislative change, such as a Zoning Code Amendment, General Plan Amendment, or new Specific Plan or Master Plan. The district planning process and documentation is intended to be tailored to the type of land use application and the issues under consideration, to address key areas and sites within the community to aid future planning and to provide information that can be used in considering a permit application.

The General Plan Policy requires the Planning Commission to consider and approve the guidelines, scope of work and Study Area for the District Plan. The Planning Commission reviewed and approved these items for the East OSSC Planning Study on December 19, 2007. This Planning Study conforms to this directive.

## C. East Open Space Stream Corridor Study Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the East OSSC Study Area were established by the Planning Commission at its meeting of December 19, 2007. The Study Area for this plan includes two (2) components: the "Study Area" and a "Sphere of Influence" area. The "Study Area" comprises of approximately 45 acres, excluding public streets. These boundaries are illustrated in Figure 2. The Study Area boundary is aligned with to the north and south by the OSSC Zoning Overlay, and extends to the west to include a portion of the Snowcreek VIII property, and to the east to include Mammoth Creek Park, both east and west of Old Mammoth Road. The Sphere of Influence reflects an area of approximately 400 feet, and encompasses existing residential uses north of Meadow Lane, open space lands controlled by the US Forest Service and Snowcreek development, and an extended area east of Mammoth Creek Park.

The General Plan defines a series of Neighborhood Character Areas, or districts for which different community characteristics and goals are defined. Although the East OSSC Planning Study Area is not identified as its own district, the Town Council determined in April 2008 that the proposed Study Area was appropriately being considered as part of a dedicated planning study, rather than attempting to incorporate it into a broader Snowcreek District Planning effort for the purposes of implementing the Town's district planning policy.

## D. Community Process

The East OSSC Planning Study will ultimately include four community workshops, hosted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning Commission, with members of the Tourism and Recreation, Public Arts and Mobility Commission. The first workshop was held on February 13, 2008, the second Workshop was held on April 30, 2008, the third workshop will be held on August 14th, and the fourth workshop date has not been determined yet. Each meeting includes a presentation by the consultant, followed by an opportunity for comment by the Joint Commissions and members of the public. Extensive public comment was received at the first and second meetings and is expected to continue through the remaining meetings in the series.

Each of the public workshops was preceded on the same day by a meeting of the Focus Group. The Focus Group consists of nine members representing various interests related to the Planning Study and Study Area. Representatives of nearby Homeowners Associations, business owners, regulatory agencies, trails advocates and environmental interests were included in the Focus Group to provide a range of opinions and expertise.

### Meeting #1: Opportunities and Constraints

The first meeting on February 13, 2008 addressed existing conditions and opportunities and/or constraints. The Focus Group, Commissioners and members of the public were provided a presentation on Study Area conditions and possible issues for discussion and were then asked to contribute

additional ideas. Minutes are included in Appendix B. Chapters 3 and 4 summarize the Existing Conditions and Opportunities and Constraints.

Opinions at the meeting were diverse. A broad range of comments regarding the broader study area and its trail and open space resources were provided. Many noted the significance and value of Mammoth Creek and its natural resources to the community and the importance of protecting these resources; the degree of appropriate intervention to improve or restore the creek corridor was discussed. The appropriateness of different types of use, interpretive opportunities, and recreation were also debated. Preservation of the natural character of the creek and its views were a significant point of consensus. Many noted the desire to see better connectivity along the corridor with some possible trail improvements, but balancing this connectivity with consideration of privacy and noise issues that might affect neighbors, need for additional regulation (eg. to avoid littering and trespassing on private property), and preservation of natural values. Opportunities for recreation at Mammoth Creek Park, including utilizing Hayden Cabin as an educational and interpretative center were also discussed. Some neighbors of The Sherwin project provided comments and expressed significant concerns on that projects proposed land use, height and density, among other issues. Desire to prevent properties along the creek from unauthorized thinning of the riparian area.

### Meeting #2: Alternatives

The second meeting for the Planning Study was held on April 30, 2008 and focused on presentation and discussion of three alternatives for the Study Area based on input from the first meeting. This second workshop focused on alternatives within the Study Area for trail alignment, land use, recreation, creek resource protection and enhancement, and management and maintenance.

The alternatives considered represented a range of views or solutions to problems or issues raised at the first Focus Group and Planning Commission meetings. The first alternative represented a continuation of existing plans, policies and development regulations. This plan is also referred to as the status quo alternative. The second alternative represented

current development plans of the property owners for Subareas 1 and 2 as well as the Town's plans for the Mammoth Creek Park in the 1990 Park and Recreation Master Plan. The third alternative, referred to as a Hybrid Plan, took into account the best ideas from meeting participants of both alternatives as interpreted by the Town Staff and the Consultant Team. The principle features of Alternative 3 include a reduced height for The Sherwin to more closely fit within the tree canopy of 65 feet; a series of trail improvements and connections; enhanced management and maintenance along Mammoth Creek; and a higher degree of improvement at Mammoth Creek Park, consistent with the Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan update.

Each alternative was compared and contrasted in a matrix provided to meeting participants. Participants used this matrix to reach consensus on the elements to be included in the recommended plan. The consensus of the participants was to develop the Alternative 3: the Hybrid Plan for further consideration at Meeting #3. Minutes are included in Appendix C. Alternatives are further described in Chapter 5.





# *Chapter 3*

## **Meeting #3: Plan Recommendations**

Minute notes will be included in Appendix D.

## **Meeting #4: Planning Commission Approval of Draft Plan**

Minute notes will be included in Appendix E.

## **Study Area Existing Characteristics**

The East OSSC Study Area can be subdivided into five (5) primary subareas. These subareas have been identified based on characteristics of property ownership and use and correspond to existing parcel lines. The five areas are shown in Figure 2, and include, from west to east, the following:

- Snowcreek VIII Parcel
- The Sherwin Parcel
- Mammoth Creek Condominiums Parcel
- Mammoth Creek Park West
- Mammoth Creek Park East

Each of these areas is described further below:

**Subarea I – Snowcreek VIII Parcel** is the western most subarea and located northwest of the intersection of Minaret and Old Mammoth Roads. The subarea includes approximately 9.1 acres and is currently undeveloped. This subarea is part of the Snowcreek VIII Master Plan area where a number of sensitive resources exist over a portion of this site making it unsuitable for development. Although the existing (1981) Snowcreek Master Plan does not designate this area for development, the proposed Snowcreek VIII Master Plan project proposes to develop a portion of this site with a General Store, Interpretative Center and a parking lot. A segment of the Main Path located south of the creek and meadow is currently under construction. An existing dirt trail is located north of the creek and there is a separate 40 foot wide existing public access easement.

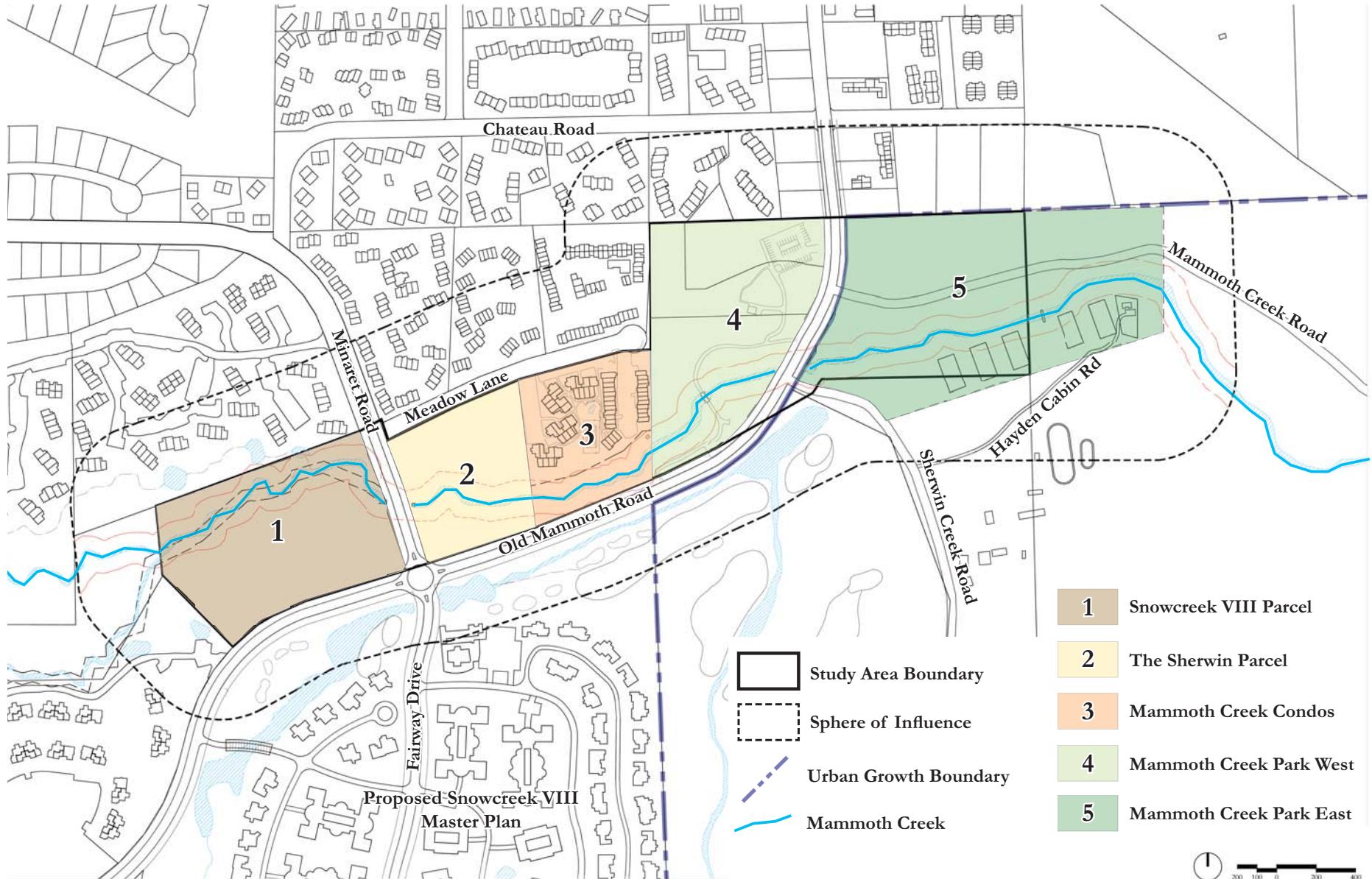


FIGURE 2 – SUB AREAS MAP

**Subarea 2 – The Sherwin Parcel** is located immediately east of Minaret Road, and south of Meadow Lane. The Sherwin area is 5.2 acres and is currently undeveloped. A resort hotel is planned for this site on the northern part of the project site with access from Meadow Lane. The southern part of the site, located south of Mammoth Creek, is proposed to remain as a publicly-accessible open space/recreational area.

**Subarea 3 – Mammoth Creek Condominium Parcel** is located in a 5.2 acre parcel that includes the Mammoth Creek Condominiums. The 61 unit development of two and three story buildings with surface parking is located to the north of Mammoth Creek. The southern part of the site is included in a public access easement and is undeveloped except for an informal dirt or decomposed granite trail.

**Subareas 4 and 5 – Mammoth Creek Park East and West** are 9.1 and 11.4 acres, respectively. Portions of the area designated for Mammoth Creek Park are located east and west of Old Mammoth Road, respectively. Portions of Subarea 4 and 5 are leased to the Town of Mammoth Lakes by the U.S. Forest Service for recreation use. The northern portion of Mammoth Creek Park West is developed by the Town and includes a parking lot, lawn area and trail access, children's play area and restrooms. Plans for this subarea include additional recreational uses and an event venue per the 1990 Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. This master plan is currently being updated.



SNOWCREEK VIII PARCEL - SUB AREA 1



THE SHERWIN PARCEL - SUB AREA 2



MAMMOTH CREEK CONDOS - SUB AREA 3



MAMMOTH CREEK PARK WEST - SUB AREA 4

## Mobility Characteristics

### Motorized Circulation

**Arterials**—The Study Area is served by two intersecting arterials, Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road. Both arterials have two lanes plus two bike lanes. Parking is not permitted on these roads. In addition there are no curbs and limited gravel shoulders. Culverts under Old Mammoth Road at Mammoth Creek Park and under Minaret Road north of Old Mammoth Road convey Mammoth Creek. The arterials' intersections are controlled by 4-way stop signs. A roundabout is planned for the Minaret and Old Mammoth Road intersection in conjunction with the proposed Snowcreek VIII development.

**Local Roads**—The Study Area includes three paved local roads and three local gravel roads. Meadow Lane, Chateau Road, and Fairway Drive are paved. Meadow Lane extends east from Minaret Road and terminates at a cul-de-sac adjacent to Mammoth Creek Park West. Chateau Road connects Minaret Road and Old Mammoth Road and terminates east of Old Mammoth Road. Fairway Drive provides access to Snowcreek V and the Golf Course. Sherwin

Creek Road, Mammoth Creek Road and Hayden Cabin Access Road are gravel roads. Mammoth Creek Road is a U.S. Forest Service gravel road that extends from an intersection on the east side of Old Mammoth Road north of Mammoth Creek. Sherwin Creek Road is also a U.S. Forest Service gravel road extending from Old Mammoth Road in a southerly direction. Hayden Cabin Access Road is a narrow gravel driveway that connects from Sherwin Creek Road to the Hayden Cabin.

**Bus Routes and Stops**—The Town of Mammoth Lakes provides bus service within the Study Area. The Old Mammoth LIFT route provides summer service (April to November) along Old Mammoth Road from central Mammoth to the Snowcreek Athletic Club/Aspen Village Apartments. In winter (November to April), the Red Line provides service within the study area along Chateau Road, Minaret Road, and on Old Mammoth Road west of Minaret Road and north of Chateau Road. Several bus stops are located on Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road in the Study Area.



OLD MAMMOTH ROAD - TYPICAL ARTERIAL STREET



MEADOW LANE - TYPICAL LOCAL STREET



BUS STOP ON MINARET ROAD

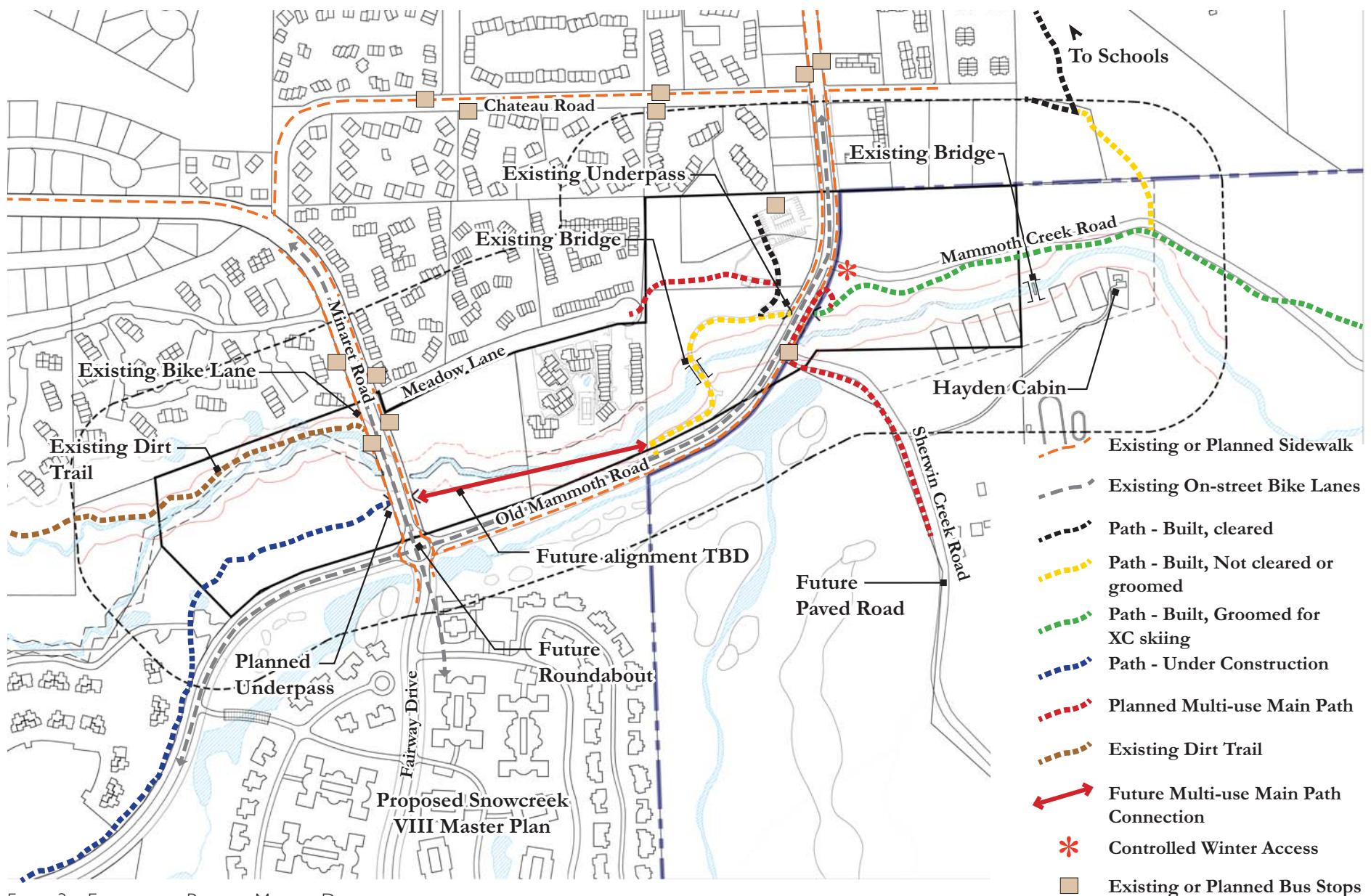


FIGURE 3 – EXISTING AND PLANNED MOBILITY DIAGRAM

## Mobility Characteristics

### Non-Motorized Circulation

**Sidewalks**—The only existing sidewalks in the Study Area are on Old Mammoth Road, extending north of the Mammoth Creek Park parking lot. However, sidewalks are planned on all arterials in accordance with the Town's 2003 Sidewalk Master Plan.

**Trails**—The Town's multi-use Main Path passes through the Study Area, although discontinuous in places. The Main Path, where improved, is an 8' wide asphalt multi-purpose trail with 2' decomposed granite shoulders, designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. The Main Path traverses Mammoth Creek Park, with connections to the easterly Forest Service Lands and northerly to public schools and the Town Center. Currently, the Main Path terminates at Mammoth Creek Park West. A segment of the Main Path is currently under construction across the Snowcreek Parcel (Subarea 1) located north of Old Mammoth Road and south of the creek and the meadow area. In Subareas 2 and 3 an informal dirt and decomposed granite trails, located north of the creek exists respectively. Public access easements for trails currently exist over private property in Subareas 1 and 3. A dirt trail exists in the existing meadow area in Subarea 1. Maintenance of the existing trails is provided by private property owners or, in the case of Mammoth Creek Park, by the Town. In 1991, the Town adopted a Trail System Plan. This plan is in the process of being updated.

**Bicycle**—As previously mentioned, on-street bike lanes are provided on Minaret Road and Old Mammoth Road.

**Cross Country Skiing**—A groomed path for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing is provided from the staging area in Mammoth Creek Park East using the alignment of the multi-use Main Path.

*Note: For the purpose of this study, the term "trails" or "trail system" refers to both dirt trails and paved multi-use paths. The term "Path" or "Main Path" or "multi-use Main Path" refers to paved segments of Class 1, off street, multi-use bike and pedestrian path systems.*



SIDEWALK ON OLD MAMMOTH ROAD



MAIN PATH UNDERPASS



SNOWSHOEING

## Urban Design Characteristics

The East OSSC Study Area has a number of urban design attributes, many of which are captured in the 2007 General Plan's Physical Development Diagram, as illustrated in Figure 4. Clearly, the urban design backbone of this Study Area is Mammoth Creek and its adjacent trail corridor. Mammoth Creek is a defining natural feature of the Study Area, bisecting it from east to west and providing a natural open space corridor or "spine" for its constituent subareas. Mammoth Creek, trails, paths and major roads are also major connectivity elements uniting the Study Area with resort development on the west to commercial and school destinations on the east. Another significant urban design characteristic of the Study Area is the visual landscape relationship composed of the riparian stream corridor vegetation, upland conifer canopy and creek meadows.

Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road are also major form-giving urban design elements of the Study Area. The intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road is a visually significant roadway junction as it forms a gateway to the planned Snowcreek VIII development. Additionally, it serves as a visual transition area between the existing residential areas to the north and the planned resort area to the south. Mammoth Creek Park anchors the eastern end of the Study Area. It provides a transition area

between the more intensive commercial uses found to the west and north along Old Mammoth Road to the more rural and open space character of areas to the south and east. Within the northern part of the Study Area and Sphere of Influence, residential development occurs in clusters of attached two to three story tall condominiums with surface parking lots. The more developed Town character transitions to open space at the Town's urban edge south of Mammoth Creek and Old Mammoth Road and east of Sherman Creek Road. Sweeping views are available to the south across the foreground composed of U. S. Forest Service lands and Snowcreek property to the Sherwin Range in the background.

The existing streetscapes including Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road may be described as having a natural/rural character. In general, paths, trails and sidewalks are set back from the roadway by a landscaped parkway and a soft-edge of vegetation with occasional stretch of split-rail fence. The general direction for the future is to retain the natural/rural streetscape character, especially that of Old Mammoth Road.



SHERWIN RANGE

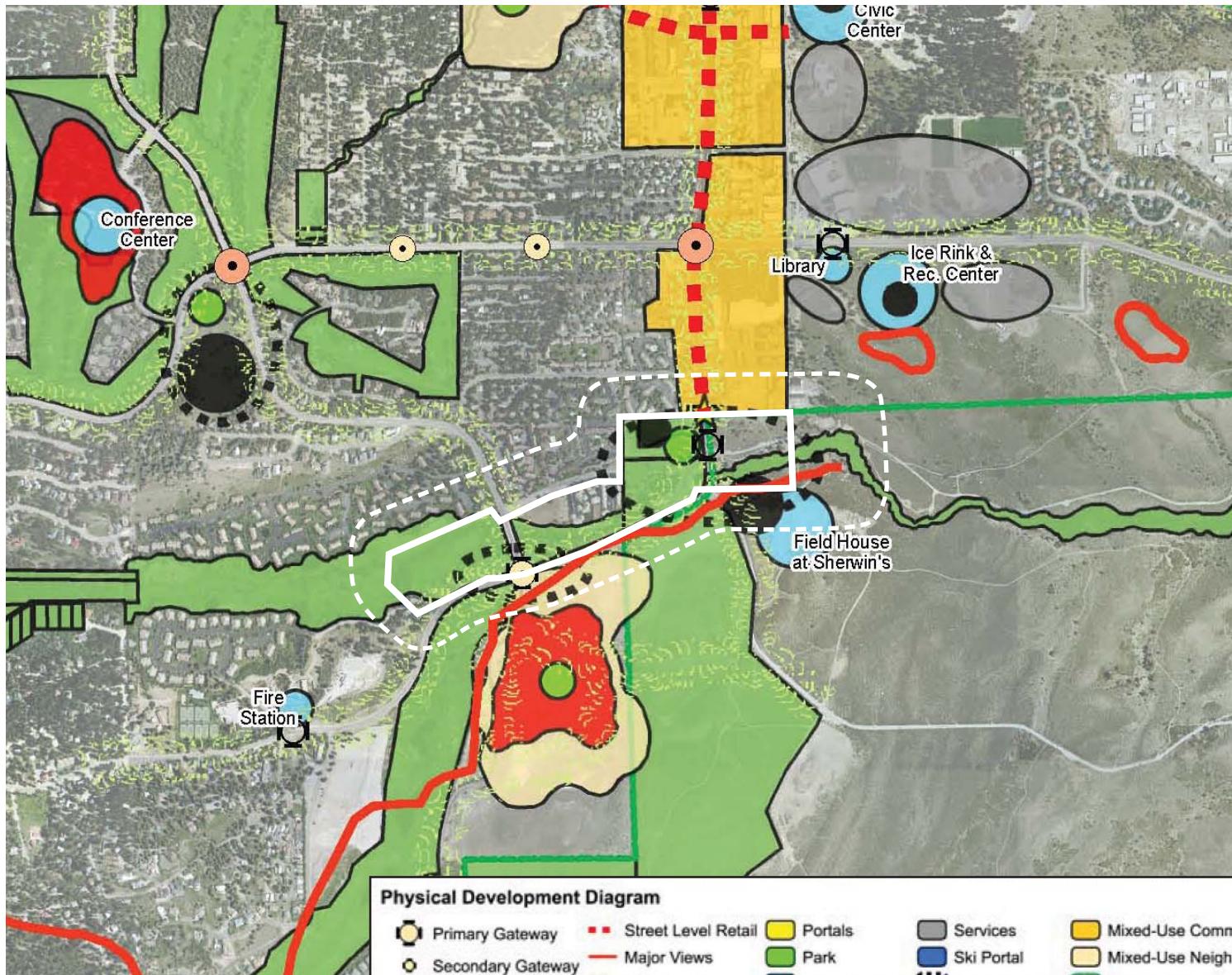


FIGURE 4 – PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DIAGRAM

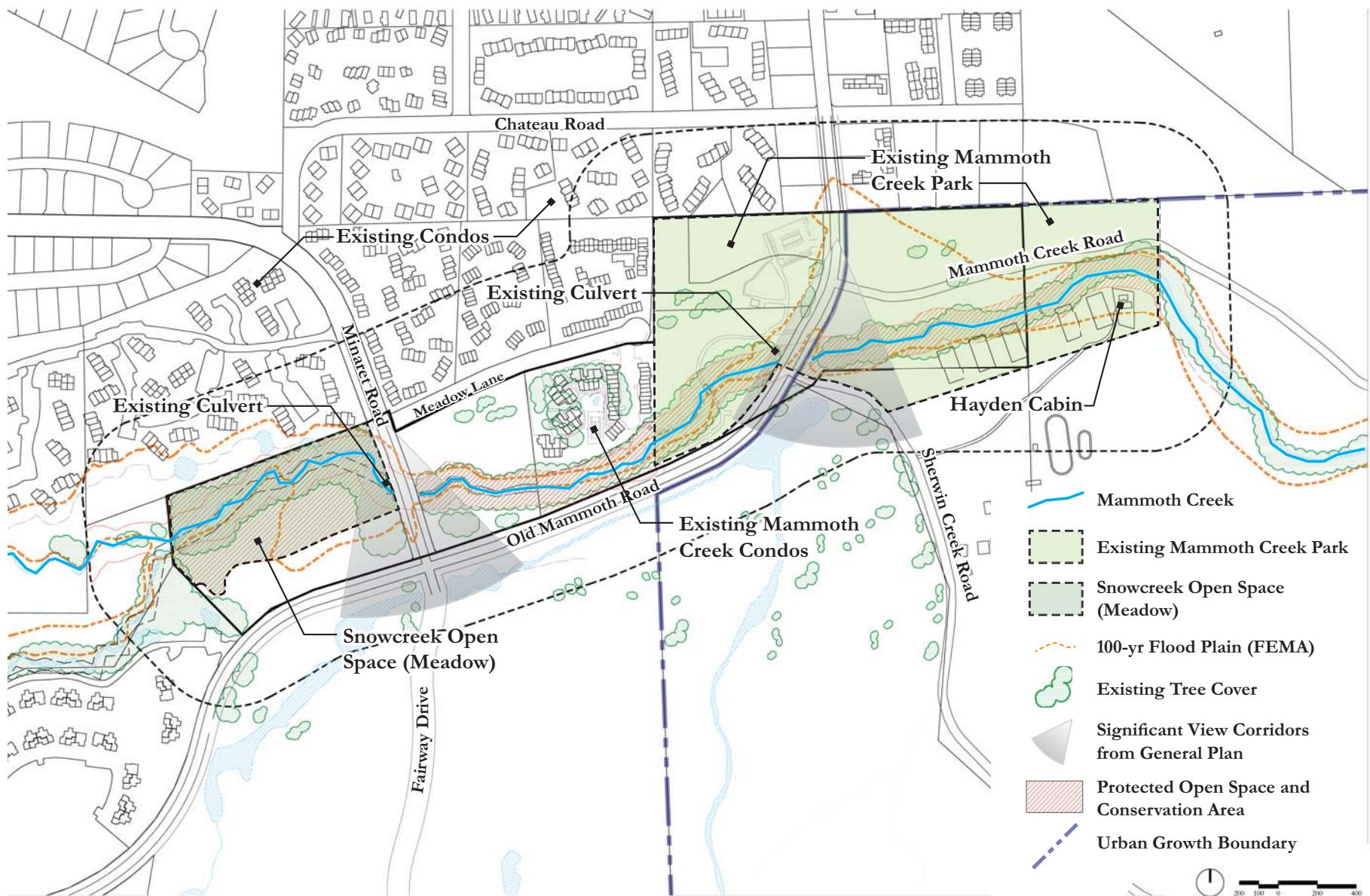


FIGURE 5 – URBAN DESIGN AND NATURAL RESOURCES

## Natural Conditions

Mammoth Creek traverses the Study Area from east to west. This watercourse is the principle drainage course within the Mammoth Lakes basin and flows from east of the Mammoth Crest and the Lakes Basin, roughly southeast through the southern part of the Town, fed by a series of tributaries. At Highway 395 Mammoth Creek is renamed Hot Creek and flows eventually into the Owens River. While occurring in a natural channel along most of its length, portions of the creek are contained within concrete culverts, including at the undercrossing of Minaret Road and of Old Mammoth Road within the Study Area. Sherwin Creek flows into Mammoth Creek east of Mammoth Creek Road.

Within the Study Area, Mammoth Creek is a well-established drainage, with boulder cobble streambeds and banks. Mammoth Creek is flood prone and overflows its banks near Hayden Cabin. Riparian vegetation, which occurs in various extents along its banks; together with its waters in the creek channel provides an important habitat for aquatic species, birds and mammals. Meadows and wetland areas occur in association with the creek drainage, notably on the Snowcreek parcel north of Old Mammoth Road.

Although detailed biological studies have not been completed for the entire creek corridor, recent EIRs for proposed developments including those for The Sherwin project and Snowcreek VIII Master Plan describe some of the key natural resource values of the Study Area. The Study Area is surrounded on three sides by existing urban development including but not limited to residential development, golf course, improved recreation facilities, and supporting roads. The primary plant communities are found in the undeveloped portions of the site: upland mountain shrub, dry meadow, aspen-willow riparian woodland, and small stands of Jeffrey Pine. Previous biological surveys from EIRs did not identify any special status plant or wildlife species, nor were their sightings of special status migratory birds or raptors. The principle natural feature is Mammoth Creek which serves as a wildlife corridor for common fish, reptiles and amphibians, mammals and birds. The undeveloped portion of the Study Area is an expansion of the migration corridor and holding areas for Mule Deer to congregate and forage until mountain passes are free of snow. The holding areas are

considered a critical component to the Round Valley Deer herd life cycle as the area provides an abundance of high quality forage that is generally not available in the herd's winter range.

A number of areas of degraded habitat exist along the creek, particularly at roadside edges and between Old Mammoth Road and Mammoth Creek. At the Snowcreek property, multiple use trails have been created in the area north of the creek, causing disturbance to the meadow habitat. Unmanaged trail systems have jeopardized the creek bank and caused erosion along portions of the creek bed.

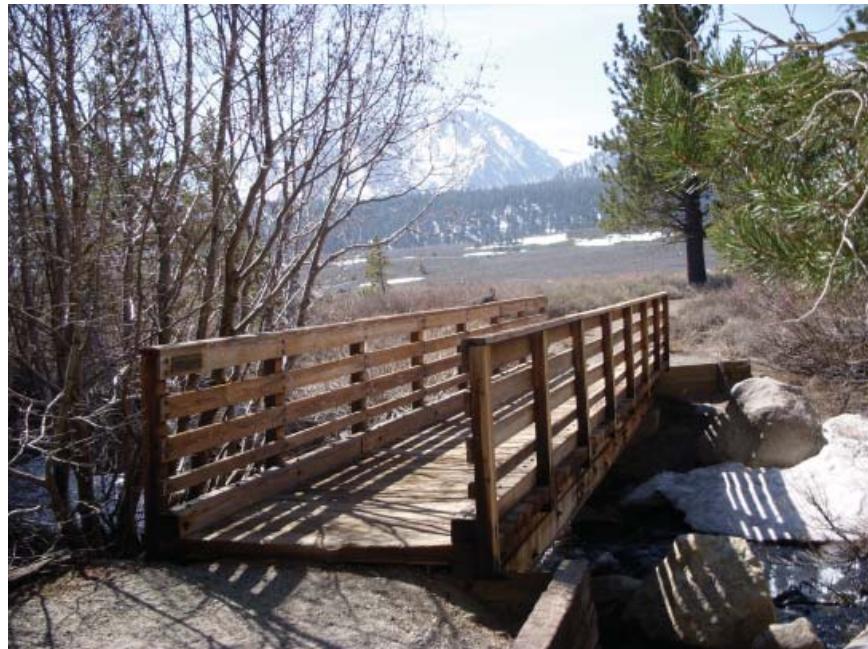
See Figure 5.

## Regulatory Context

### Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan

The Town of Mammoth Lakes adopted an update to its General Plan in August 2007. The 2007 General Plan provides goals, actions and policies that inform development and conservation decisions within the community over the coming years, including many directly relevant to the Study Area. A detailed listing of General Plan goals and policies relevant to the Study Area is provided in Appendix A. They include statements from the Community Vision reflecting the importance of Mammoth Creek as a key natural, scenic and recreational resource. A number of other policies are applicable to the Study Area related to community design, natural resources, mobility, and open space and recreation among other topics. In summary, these policies provide the following key planning direction relevant to the Planning Study Area:

- Preserve and enhance Mammoth Creek as an exceptional natural, scenic and recreational resource.
- Be stewards of a sustainable natural environment and resources.
- Preserve views and scenic resources.
- Provide a built environment that complements the natural environment.
- Create an integrated network of linked open spaces and trails.



BRIDGE TO HAYDEN CABIN IN MAMMOTH CREEK PARK EAST



MAMMOTH CREEK IN THE SHERWIN SUBAREA



MAMMOTH CREEK IN CULVERT BELOW OLD MAMMOTH ROAD



VIEW NORTH FROM SNOWCREEK GOLF COURSE FEATURING 65' CONIFER CANOPY

- Provide for feet-first mobility and connectivity.
- Provide increased range and diversity of recreational and open space opportunities.
- Preserve water quality and environmental resources.

In addition to these policies the General Plan recognizes the significance of Mammoth Creek to the community by calling for the preparation of a “Special Study” for the Mammoth Creek Corridor and identifying various topics that are to be addressed in that study. Although the East OSSC Planning Study does have a number of overlapping areas with the Mammoth Creek Special Study, the two are separate work efforts.

The Mammoth Creek Special Study is intended to address the entire creek corridor within the Town limits (and possibly adjacent areas), and to undertake a broad range of study of the environmental, aesthetic, and scenic resources of the corridor. Such a study will likely be undertaken as a cooperative planning effort initiated by the Town, in conjunction with other agencies and technical consultants. The East OSSC Planning Study has been initiated in conjunction with the Town’s district planning policy for a major project application, The Sherwin; and is focused on a more restricted study area adjacent to the proposed project site. The East OSSC Study will address some topics included in the scope of the Mammoth Creek Special Study, but others unique to the Study Area and future development. The results of the East OSSC Planning Study will be both relevant and informative to the Mammoth Creek Special Study when it is prepared.

### **Study Area Specific Goals**

The goals and policies of the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan help to define some of the planning goals relevant to the East OSSC Planning Study. A number of these are drawn from the longer list of characteristics provided in the General Plan for the Snowcreek District. Since the East OSSC District, as defined, is a sub-part of this broader area as mapped in the General Plan, only relevant goals are listed here.

- Western range and meadow; spacious setting and wide open with backdrop of Sherwin Range
- Anchor for and connection to the Old Mammoth Road District
- Stress stewardship of land and resources

- Provide access and staging areas to Sherwin Range and “community uses” accessible from Old Mammoth Road
- Landscape that reinforces sage, Manzanita and wet meadow
- Integrated with Mammoth Creek Park and Mammoth Creek Corridor, the historical museum site, equestrian center, parking, trails and snow play, and future possibilities such as a recreation center or amphitheater.
- Variety of visitor lodging

In addition, the Special Study Area criteria for Mammoth Creek Corridor is as follows:

- The value of biological, scenic and aesthetic resources
- Water quality
- Pedestrian and bicycle trails, staging areas and vehicular access
- Potential for neighborhood conflicts
- A significant community center connecting Old Mammoth Road and Snowcreek; Mammoth Creek Park is designed around the stream and environment to provide:
  - Access to Mammoth Creek
  - Grand Views
  - Appropriate active recreation
  - Family recreation
  - A place to hold special events
  - Staging for Forest Service activities
  - Concessions and facilities including parking and restrooms
  - A connection with Forest Service lands and the historic museum site.

### **General Plan Land Use Designations**

The General Plan Land Use Map describes planned land use designations throughout the Town. See Figure 6. The planned land uses for the Study Area are as follows:

**Resort (R):** This land use designation applies to the Snowcreek VIII parcel and to the wider Snowcreek property within the Sphere of Influence. This

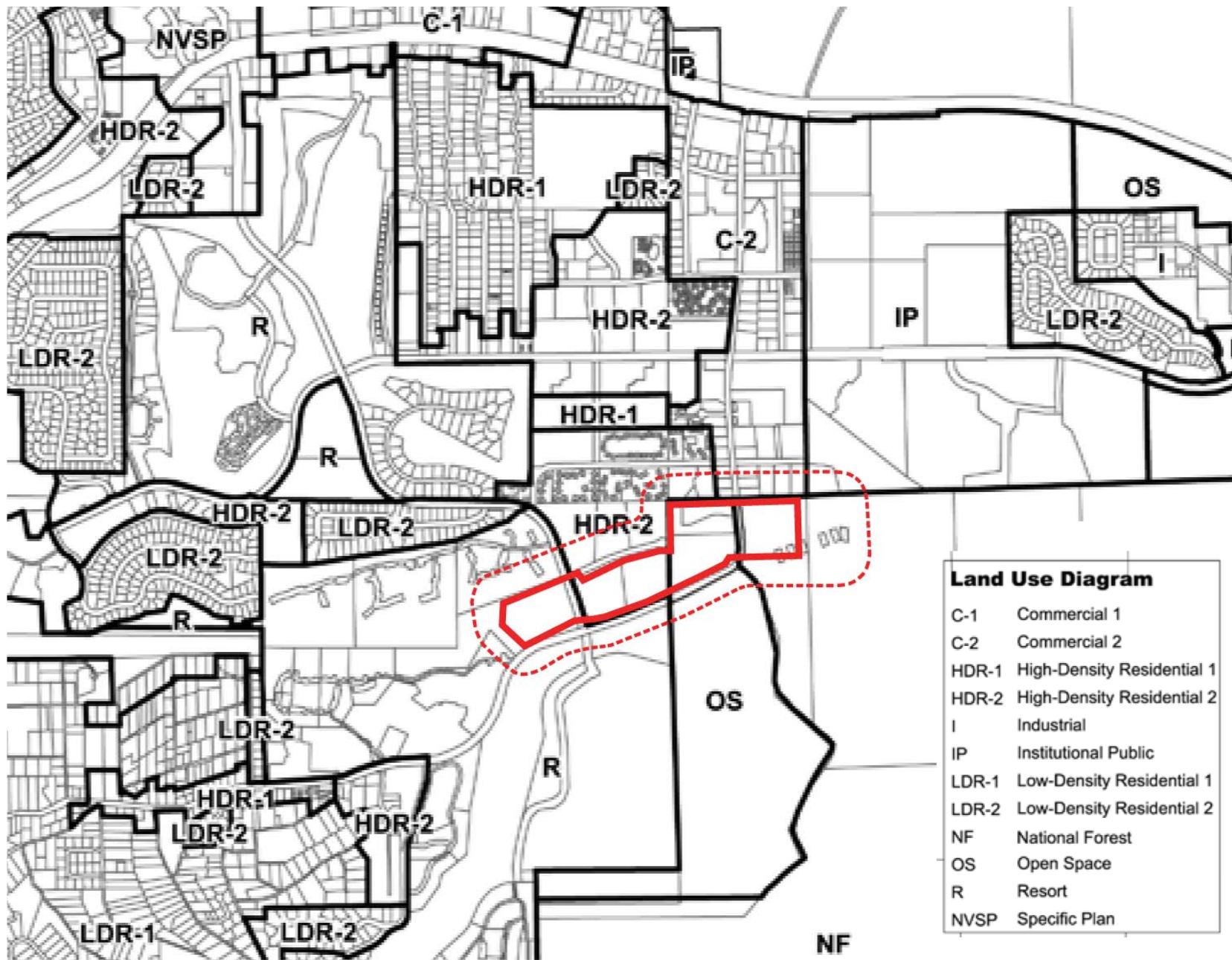


FIGURE 6 – GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM

designation allows for commercial, mixed uses including visitor lodging, amenities and services, and workforce housing. The base densities are 6 to a maximum of 8 residential dwelling units per acre and 12 to 16 hotel rooms per acre.

**High Density Residential 2 (HDR-2):** The HDR-2 land use designation applies to The Sherwin and Mammoth Creek Condos sites (Subareas 2 and 3, respectively). Neighboring residential parcels to the north, within the Sphere of Influence, are similarly designated. The HDR-2 land use designation allows for transient visitor lodging, hotels and residential multi-unit style development including townhouses, apartments and condominiums, at densities between 6 and 12 units per acre and up to 36 hotel rooms per acre.

**Open Space (OS):** Mammoth Creek Park (Subarea 4) is designated for Open Space, as is a portion of Mammoth Creek Park East (Subarea 5). This land use designation is established to protect the Town's public and private open space resources including parks and preserve as well as protect sensitive open space and environmental resources respectively.

**National Forest (NF):** The remainder of Subarea 5 is designated National Forest to reflect the ownership of this land by the U.S. Forest Service. This designation applies to lands administered by the Inyo National Forest that are outside the adopted Urban Growth Boundary and not subject to the land use jurisdiction of the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

## Zoning Code

Zoning implements the General Plan through development regulations for each zoning district. The Study Area includes several different zoning districts and also contains an Open Space Stream Corridor [OSSC] overlay zone. Applicable zoning districts are found in Figure 6. These zoning districts include Resort (R), Residential Multiple-Family 2 (RMF-2) and Public and Quasi-Public (PS), corresponding to the Resort, HDR-2, and Open Space.

The OSSC Overlay Zone is designed to protect sensitive stream and drainage courses from development, to recognize and preserve these environmentally sensitive areas as a community resource, to protect water quality and preserve

wetland habitat. The OSSC Overlay permits development as specified by the underlying zone.

The Zoning Code also includes property development standards for each zone. These include density, setbacks, height and lot coverage, as well as a number of other standards. Development standards for zoning districts within the Study Area are summarized below:

For the RMF-2/HDR-2 zone, the allowed density is twelve (12) dwelling units per acre or thirty-six (36) guest rooms per net acre for hotels, motels and fractional-use projects. The front yard setbacks in this zone are 25', a 10' side-yard setback at the property line and a 20' side yard setback if adjacent to a public street, and a 20' rear yard setback. The maximum coverage of the RMF-2 zone is 60% of the gross lot area. The height limit is 35' unless the majority of parking is provided understructure and if so, the height limit is increased to 45'. It should be noted that the proposed Sherwin project is requesting an amendment to the Zoning Code that would allow for a maximum building height of up to 77 feet within the RMF-2 zone at this location.

For the Resort zone, the allowable density is 8 units per acre. Hotel/Motel uses shall be computed at a ratio of two (2) guest rooms for each unit. The maximum site coverage shall not exceed 50%. Other standards are determined as a condition of plan approval. Within the Study Area the Resort designation includes the Snowcreek property which is subject to a Master Plan. The existing Master Plan was approved in 1981 but is currently proposed to be updated for the portion of the Snowcreek property that remains undeveloped. The updated Master Plan (Snowcreek VIII Master Plan) would allow for up to 1,050 residential units, a hotel, and an expansion of the existing golf course from 9 to 18 holes, on the largest part of the project site south of Old Mammoth Road. Construction of an Interpretive Center and a General Store is proposed on a smaller parcel located north of Old Mammoth Road west of Minaret.

The Town's development standards have established a protective setback from Mammoth Creek to protect the creek corridor and adjacent sensitive resource. This setback is defined by a 50' setback from Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM). The Mammoth Creek Stream Corridor is also subject to other constraints including being located in the 100-year flood plain.

For further detail, please refer to the Municipal Code, Title 17, Zoning.

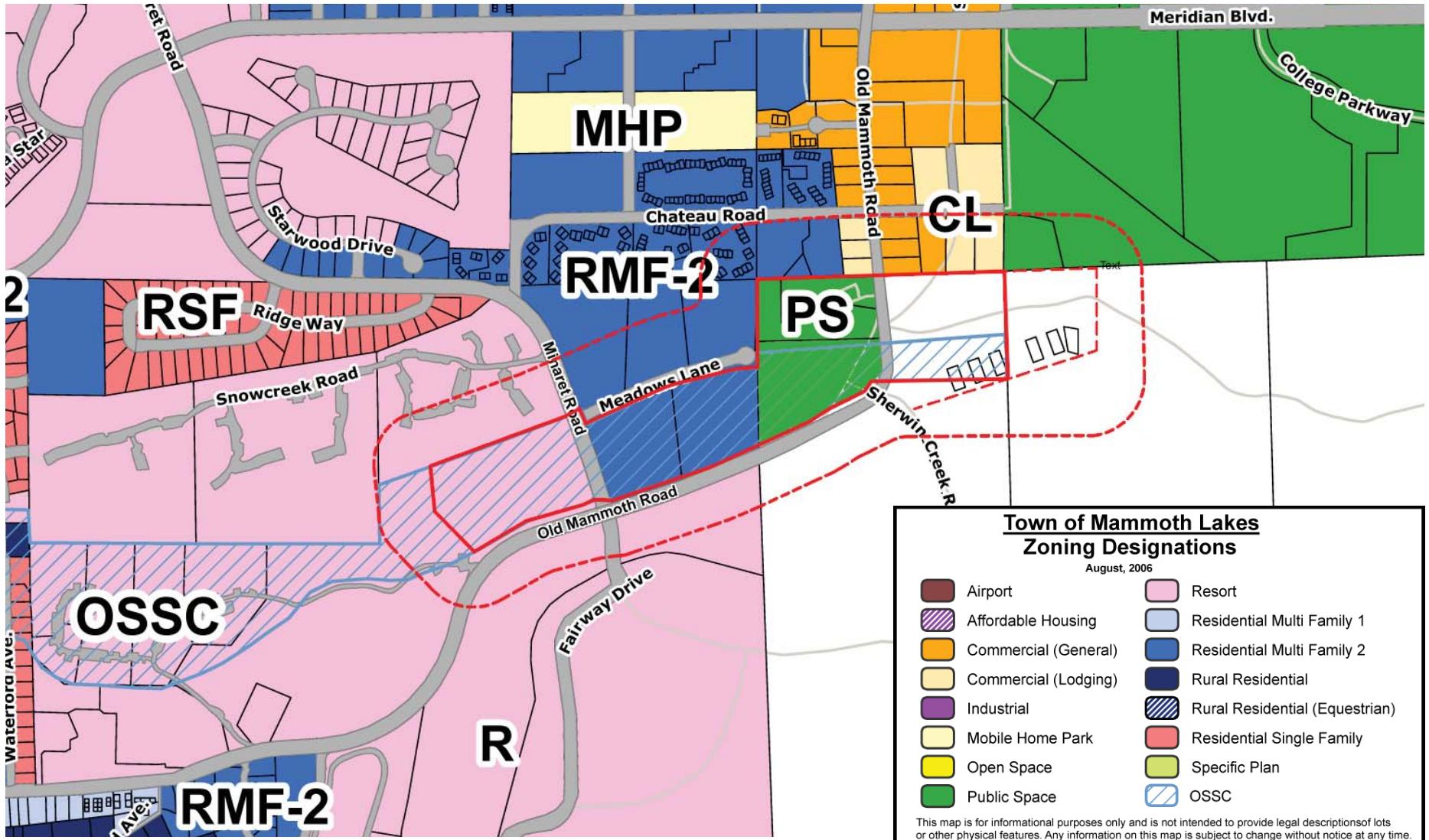


FIGURE 7 – ZONING MAP



# *Chapter 4*

## **Study Area Opportunities & Constraints**

Opportunities and constraints for development or conservation are called out separately in the discussion below but in fact can reflect the same feature depending on its interpretation. For example, the presence of the creek may constrain development by limiting development within its setback area, but this limitation on development provides an opportunity for connectivity and access by creating a relatively uninterrupted linear corridor. Opportunities and constraints are described in three major categories:

- Trails and Mobility
- Land Use and Recreation
- Creek Restoration and Management

### **Trails and Mobility**

Concerns for trails connectivity and mobility are critical within the Study Area. These concerns reflect the desire to extend and connect components of the existing multi-use Main Path system, promote feet-first transportation, expand trail-based recreation opportunities, and provide better links to public lands and open space.

#### **Opportunity**

The Mammoth Creek Corridor represents a key locational opportunity to extend and connect the Town's multi-use Main Path system, particularly from east to west. The existing improved trails and multi-use paths have some significant gaps in the Study Area. However, existing public right of way, public access easements, and future development projects provide the opportunity to expand and connect the trail network.



MAIN PATH IN MAMMOTH CREEK PARK EAST

#### **Constraint**

Although connectivity is an important goal, potential conflicts exist that require thoughtful planning of trail alignments. For example, extending the Main Path along the Mammoth Creek corridor may introduce additional public use and impacts to the sensitive stream corridor resources. Private property extends across the stream corridor in some parts of the Study Area, including Snowcreek, The Sherwin and the Mammoth Creek Condominiums, with the potential to introduce use conflicts with adjacent private development.

#### **Opportunity**

Creek and road crossings are provided at Mammoth Creek Park and under Old Mammoth Road. Sidewalks along Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road are envisioned in Town plans where none currently exist. The future development of The Sherwin site (Subarea 2) could provide an additional opportunity to provide a pedestrian bridge/trail crossing the creek from north to south. The future development of Snowcreek may include a pedestrian underpass of Minaret Road associated with the consideration of the roundabout.

#### **Constraint**

While east-west connectivity offers a number of options, connections north and south are more constrained. Crossings of Mammoth Creek and Old Mammoth Road need to be successfully negotiated without impacting safety or sensitive creek resources. Existing development and access across private property, such as at the Snowcreek and Mammoth Creek Condos, constrain the potential for additional north-south connections in these areas.

#### **Opportunity**

Mammoth's climate offers opportunities to create diverse trail-based recreation opportunities in winter and summer. Since golfing is a summer use, the Snowcreek golf course may be able to accommodate trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter that could connect to the existing winter trail network in town, or south and east to National Forest Lands. Such use would need to be negotiated with the Snowcreek property owner, and managed/maintained as appropriate.



#### **Constraint**

Winter conditions and snow management presents a challenge to maintaining an accessible pedestrian network in the winter. Snow removed from streets and parking lots is deposited nearby and may block pedestrian access during the winter and damage plants. These concerns must be addressed with proper management solutions.

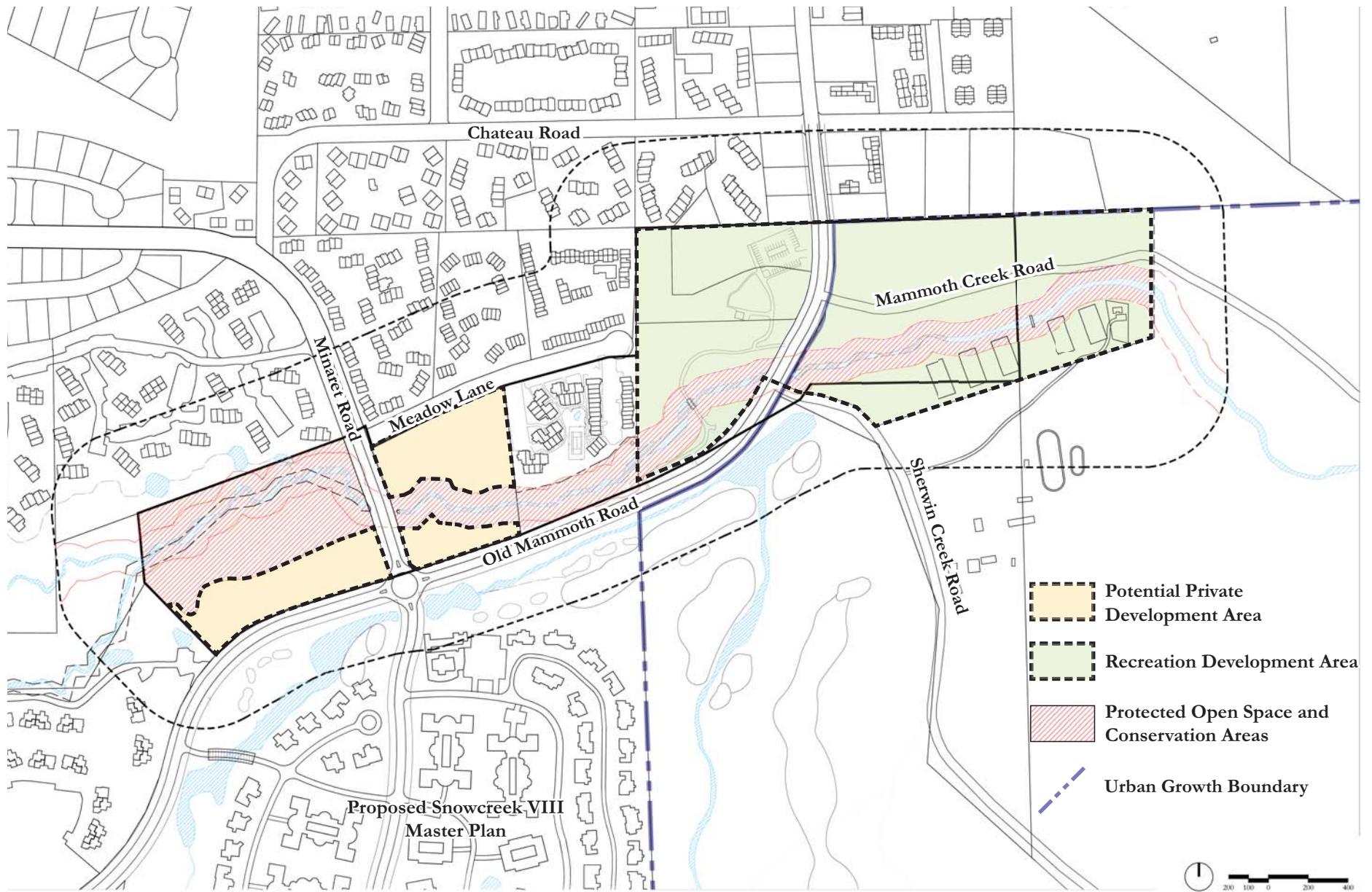


FIGURE 8 – DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

## **Land Use and Recreation**

The Study Area includes Mammoth Creek Park and two undeveloped parcels whose future land use will introduce substantial changes along this section of Old Mammoth Road, but which may also contribute to open space/recreation opportunities within the Town. See Figure 8.

### **Opportunity**

Current zoning allows for development of key parcels with resort, transient lodging or residential uses. This would allow for the creation of new destination resort attractions and visitor accomodations.

### **Constraint**

The opportunity of undeveloped parcels suitable for development and desire to conserve the existing creek open space character and uninterrupted views to the south needs to be resolved. If development is clustered to preserve open space, higher building heights are needed to accommodate allowable densities, which may impact private property views, but which may help to preserve the open space character along Old Mammoth Road and the Mammoth Creek corridor and preserve views from public roads.

### **Opportunity**

The Town is undertaking an update to its Parks and Recreation Master Plan that considers expansion of recreational opportunities and facilities at Mammoth Creek Park. This public open space area includes the historic Hayden Cabin which may be an excellent location for interpretive facilities and activities. In addition, the Town has identified Mammoth Creek Park as a possible location for some type of event center or venue, which may also serve as an activity node or anchor at the southern end of the Old Mammoth Road commercial district.

### **Constraint**

Intensification or introduction of new facilities or amenities need to consider compatibility with adjacent residential uses, including possible issues related to noise and parking. Funding for construction, management and maintenance of such facilities would need to be assured.



PICNIC AREA ADJACENT TO MAMMOTH CREEK IN MAMMOTH CREEK PARK EAST

## Creek Restoration and Management

Mammoth Creek is a critical resource in the Study Area and its importance is clearly expressed through goals and policies of the General Plan. However, restoration and management of the creek has historically occurred in an ad hoc manner. Habitat and vegetation health is dependent on management efforts that are currently do not exist in the Study Area.

### Opportunity

Mammoth Creek is a major “form giver”, amenity and signature feature for the Study Area. Accordingly, any enhancement will improve the visual landscape identity and natural resource value of the Study Area and Mammoth Creek respectively.

### Constraint

Management and coordination of restoration efforts is a challenge due to the disparity of property ownership along this part of the corridor, variation in development plans and schedules, and patterns of existing development. Although public access easements exist through two private properties adjacent to the creek, the lack of management of access through these easements has degraded habitat and introduced use conflicts with neighboring private property.

### Opportunity

Riparian and Conifer Tree Canopy – The existing tree canopy is an important visual asset and possesses natural resource values worthy of conservation. The existing background Conifer tree canopy grows to a average height of approximately 65'. This canopy provides an important back drop to development, as development below this height fades into the existing tree canopy. Existing trees should be retained, if at all possible. Additional riparian and Conifer trees should be planted in the East Open Space Stream Corridor.

### Constraint

Preservation of the existing mature and specimen trees is an important goal of the Town. Specimen Tree removal should be minimized and mitigated when allowed. Snow storage along the Mammoth Creek corridor has impacted the riparian vegetation. Effective setbacks from the creek should be maintained to protect sensitive vegetation.



MAMMOTH CREEK



VIEW OF CONIFER TREE CANOPY FROM SNOWCREEK GOLF COURSE LOOKING EAST



# *Chapter 5*

## **Alternative Plans Considered**

Three alternative plans proposed for the East OSSC Planning Study Area were prepared for the April 28, 2008 meeting of the Focus Group and Commission. The alternatives reflected a range of key issues, opportunities and constraints for the Study Area as identified through background research and the input from the first Planning Study meeting.

The narrative below provides an overview of the three alternatives and their key features. A summary matrix on the following page allows for easy comparison of the alternatives features. See Figure 9.

While the alternatives reflect a series of options for different issues, all three alternatives are underlain by a set of common planning “givens” or assumptions. These givens, which are shown in Figure 10, generally reflect existing conditions and future improvements assumed with some degree of certainty to be implemented in the foreseeable future.

FIGURE 9 – ALTERNATIVE MATRIX

Alternatives	Trails	Land Use / Access
<b>Planning Givens</b>  (Elements Common to all Alternatives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidewalk on both sides of Minaret, south side of OMR and east side of Sherwin Creek Road</li> <li>• Trail staging area in East Mammoth Creek Park with informal trail to Hayden Cabin</li> <li>• All existing trails</li> <li>• Some trail connection from Minaret underpass to Mammoth Creek Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mammoth Creek Condos no change</li> <li>• Roundabout at Minaret &amp; Old Mammoth Road</li> <li>• Sherwin Creek Road paved</li> <li>• Future road connection from Snowcreek VIII to Sherwin Creek Road</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative #1</b>  <b>Existing Policy</b> <b>/ Status Quo</b>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Existing dirt trail north of creek, main trail north of OMR under construction including future trail underpass</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - New Improved on-street /pedestrian bike trail on OMR</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Unimproved trail adjacent to creek remains. New on-street pedestrian/bike trail on OMR.</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Existing trail system, trail to Sherwin Creek Road, informal trail to Hayden Cabin via existing bridge</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Open space and recreation area per 1981 Snowcreek Master Plan</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - Residential Condos/Transient Lodging on both sides of creek, 45' max height. Vehicular access from Meadow Lane and OMR</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - No change</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - See land use givens per 1990 Parks Master Plan</p>
<b>Alternative #2</b>  <b>Proposed</b> <b>Plans</b>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Existing dirt trail north of creek, main trail north of OMR under construction, including future trail underpass</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - Improved off street pedestrian/bike trail and bridge, plus informal trails on east and south side of hotel</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Existing informal dirt trail within Mammoth Creek to remain as is</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Existing trail system, trail to Sherwin Creek Road, informal trail to Hayden Cabin via existing bridge</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Interpretative Center, General Store, parking lot and open space. Vehicular access via two curb cuts on OMR</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - Hotel on north side of creek, 37'-77' max height and open space on south side of creek. Access from Meadow Lane</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - No Change</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - See land use givens per 1990 Parks Master Plan</p>
<b>Alternative #3</b>  <b>Hybrid</b> <b>Plan</b>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Trail on north side of creek improved to 6' wide elevated boardwalk to protect the meadow. Main trail north of OMR under construction including future trail underpass</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - Improved 10' off-street trail and bridge south of creek, plus informal trail north of creek</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Improved 10' off-street trail south of creek</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Existing trail system, new trail to Sherwin Creek Road, new paved trail and bridge to Hayden Cabin</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - General Store at west end of site adjacent to OMR, Interpretive Center relocated to Hayden Cabin. Vehicular access via one curb cut on OMR</p> <p><b>The Sherwin</b> - Hotel on north side of creek, hotel height reduced to 43'-64' per Sherwin EIR. Access from Meadow Lane.</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - No change</p> <p><b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Future improvements per 2008 Draft Parks &amp; Rec Master Plan. New 4-way intersection to Mammoth Creek Park East and West.</p>

Recreation	Creek Restoration	Creek & Trail Management Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open Space and recreation uses per the 1990 Parks Master Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Open Space/Recreation per 1981 Snowcreek Master Plan  <b>The Sherwin</b> - None  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - None  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - See givens per 1990 Parks Master Plan – one event venue site only</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Leave as is  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Leave as is  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Leave as is  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Leave as is</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Property Owner  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Creek = Property Owner; Trail = Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Creek = Property Owner; Trail = Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - The Town</p>
<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Interpretative Center on private property as noted  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Planned low key recreation and interpretive uses south of creek.  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - No change  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - See givens per 1990 Parks Master Plan – one event venue site only</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Enhanced restoration of Creek and Meadow  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Enhanced restoration of the Creek and expanded open space area south of creek  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Clean-up and Maintenance only  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Enhanced Creek restoration</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Property Owner  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Creek = Property Owner; Trails = Property Owner &amp; The Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Creek = Property Owner; Trails = The Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - The Town</p>
<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Open space extends to area south of creek, east of General Store  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Planned low key recreation south of creek. Interpretive uses relocated to Hayden Cabin  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - No change  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Future improvements per 2008 Draft Parks &amp; Rec Master Plan include: sports fields, tennis courts, dog park, picnic tables and two event venues. Hayden Cabin to be restored as an interpretive center.</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Enhanced creek and expanded meadow restoration  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Enhanced creek restoration and expand to area south of creek  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Enhanced creek restoration, including riparian vegetation replacement  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - Expanded creek restoration, including additional area between the existing trail area north of OMR</p>	<p><b>Snowcreek</b> - Association to include Property Owners, Volunteers and/or the Town  <b>The Sherwin</b> - Association to include Property Owners, Volunteers and/or the Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Condos</b> - Association to include Property Owners, Volunteers and/or the Town  <b>Mammoth Creek Park</b> - The Town and Volunteers</p>

## **Planning Givens**

**Mammoth Creek Park**—Mammoth Creek Park will be improved in accordance with the revised Park and Recreation Master Plan currently in preparation. This will include a future multi-use Path to Hayden Cabin, and a parking/staging area in Mammoth Creek Park East.

**Roundabout**—A roundabout will be implemented by Snowcreek at the intersection of Mammoth Creek Road and Minaret. This roundabout will eliminate the possible need for a signalized intersection.

**Future Paved Roads**—Sherwin Creek Road will be paved in the future.

**Main Path**—The multi-use Main Path, currently under construction, will be extended from Snowcreek (Subarea 1) to Mammoth Creek Park West. In general, the Main Path is 8' wide paved surface with 2' decomposed granite shoulders. The trail is planned to underpass Minaret Road as part of Snowcreek improvements.

**Sidewalks**—Planned sidewalks will be consistent with the Town's 2003 Sidewalk Master Plan including the sidewalk planned for the south side of Old Mammoth Road.

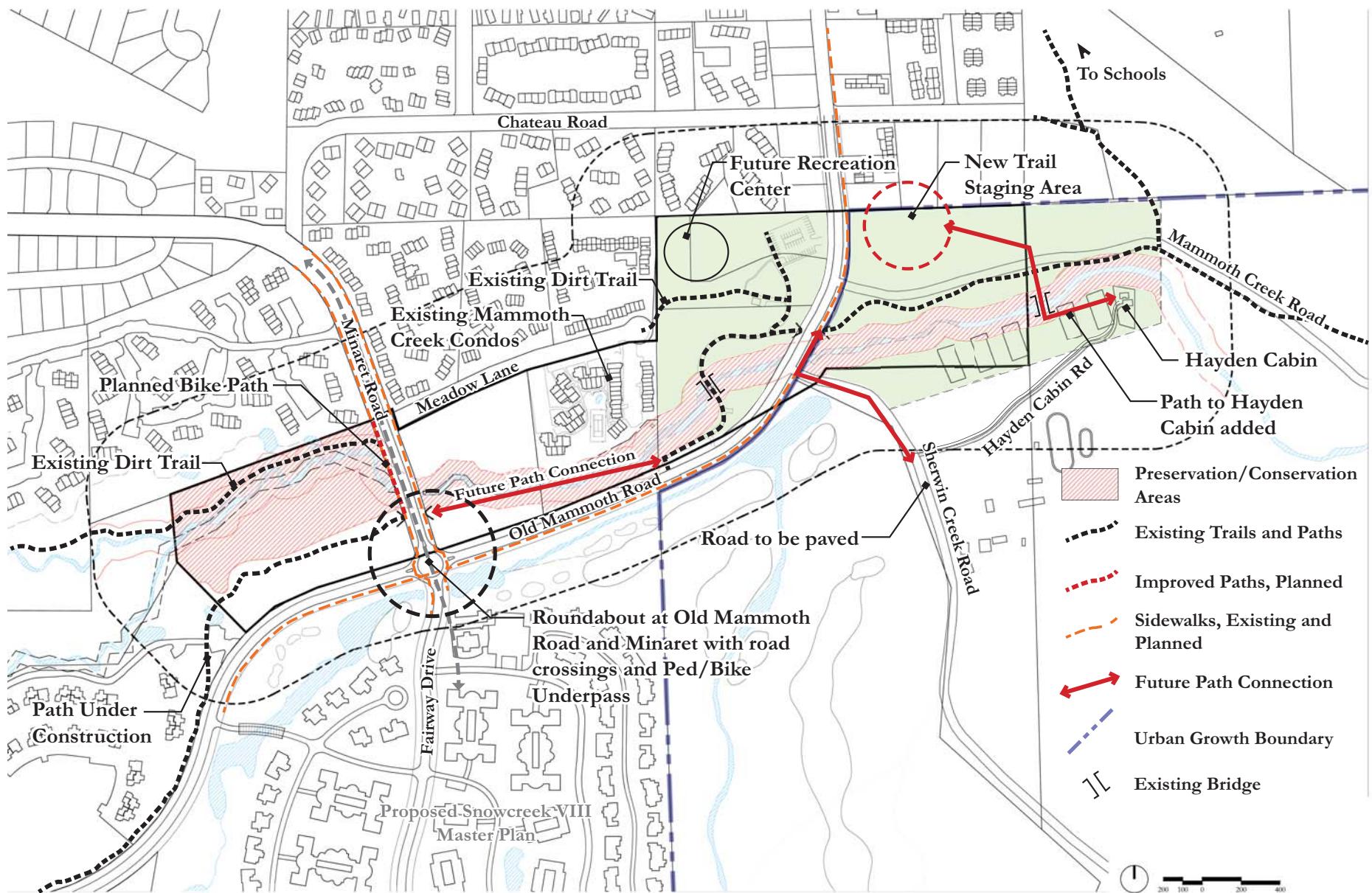


FIGURE 10 – PLANNING GIVENS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

## **Alternative I: Existing Policy/Status Quo**

Alternative I assumes that future land uses and other improvements occur as proposed under existing approved plans and policies. In the case of the Snowcreek site (Subarea 1), open space land use indicated in the 1981 Master Plan would occur. For The Sherwin Site (Subarea 2), future development would occur as allowed by the existing zoning code regulations which permit transient lodging or condos up to 45 feet with parking below the structure. The Mammoth Creek Condominiums (Subarea 3) would remain as they are today. At Mammoth Creek Park, new facilities would develop as proposed in the 1990 Parks Master Plan. In terms of mobility improvements, new trails would occur within the existing right of way to avoid crossing private properties. Other trail improvements would be minimal, and mobility improvements limited to those necessitated by new development. Finally, creek management and restoration would occur on a very limited basis, or not at all, reflecting the current status quo. See Figure II.

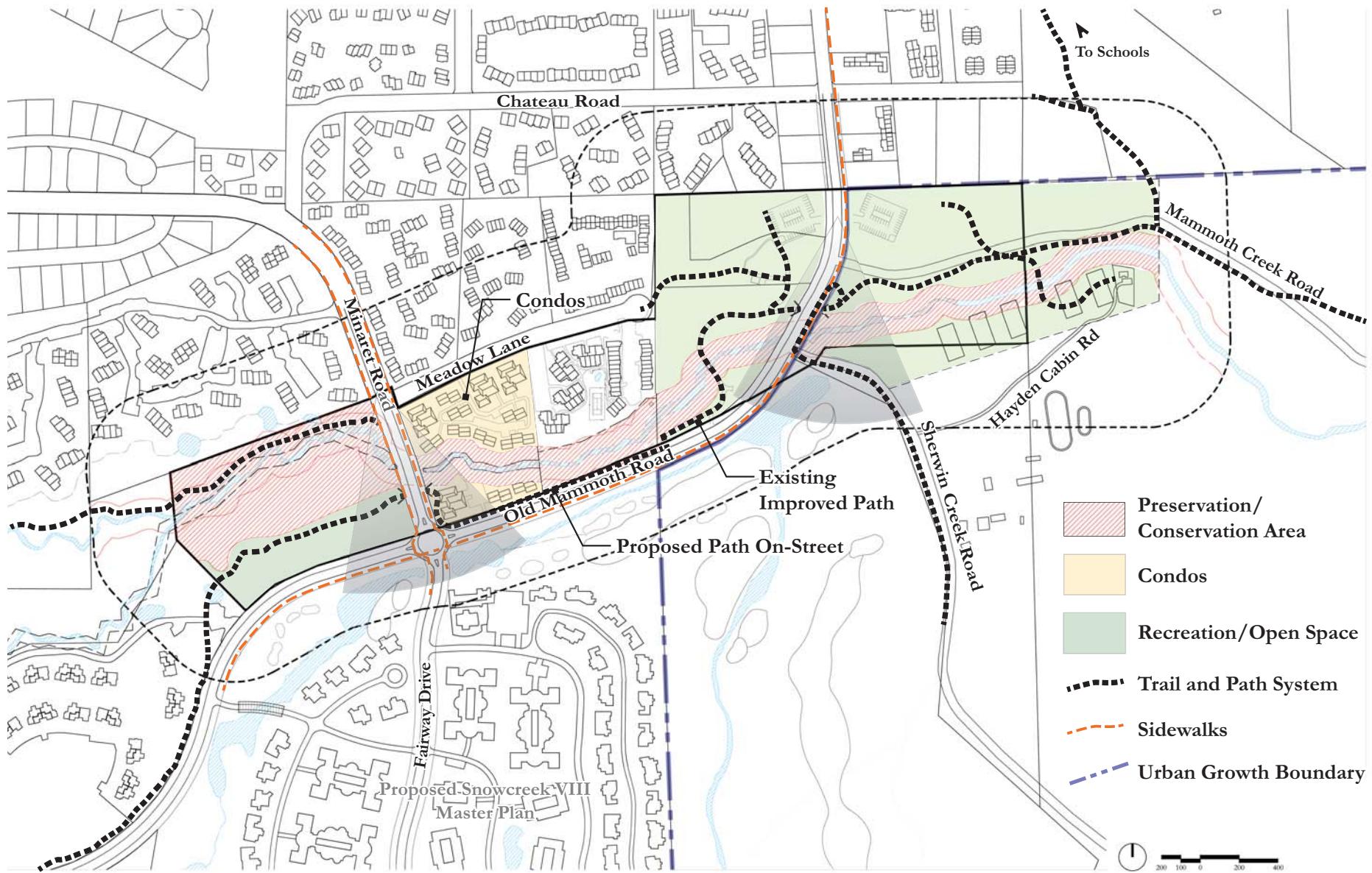


FIGURE 11 – ALTERNATIVE 1: EXISTING POLICY/STATUS QUO

## **Alternative 2: Proposed Plans**

In this alternative, changes would occur within the Study Area as reflected in a number of recent proposed projects and plans. For the Snowcreek parcel, uses would occur as suggested in the proposed Snowcreek VIII Master Plan update (ie. a new general store and interpretive center on this parcel). The existing dirt trail north of the creek within the existing 40 foot public access easement would remain unchanged. For The Sherwin parcel, a condominium hotel ranges up to a height of 77 feet is clustered on the property north of the creek, and open space/recreation uses are indicated on the southern portion. For the Mammoth Creek Condos, no change to existing land use is proposed; however the existing informal trail across the property within a public access easement would be improved to meet Town multi-use Main Path standards. Mammoth Creek Park would also see limited improvements per the Town's 1990 Parks Master Plan. Mobility improvements in this alternative would be somewhat more substantial. They would include trail improvements adjacent to Mammoth Creek as proposed by The Sherwin project on that site. A multi-use Main Path through the Mammoth Creek Condos public access easement with maintenance and restoration would be increased in this alternative over that of Alternative 1, allowing some level of restoration to the creek at future development sites (Snowcreek and The Sherwin) and at Mammoth Creek Park. Management of trails and creek access would be at a higher level but would rely on individual property owners (whether private owners or the Town) exclusively. See Figure 12.

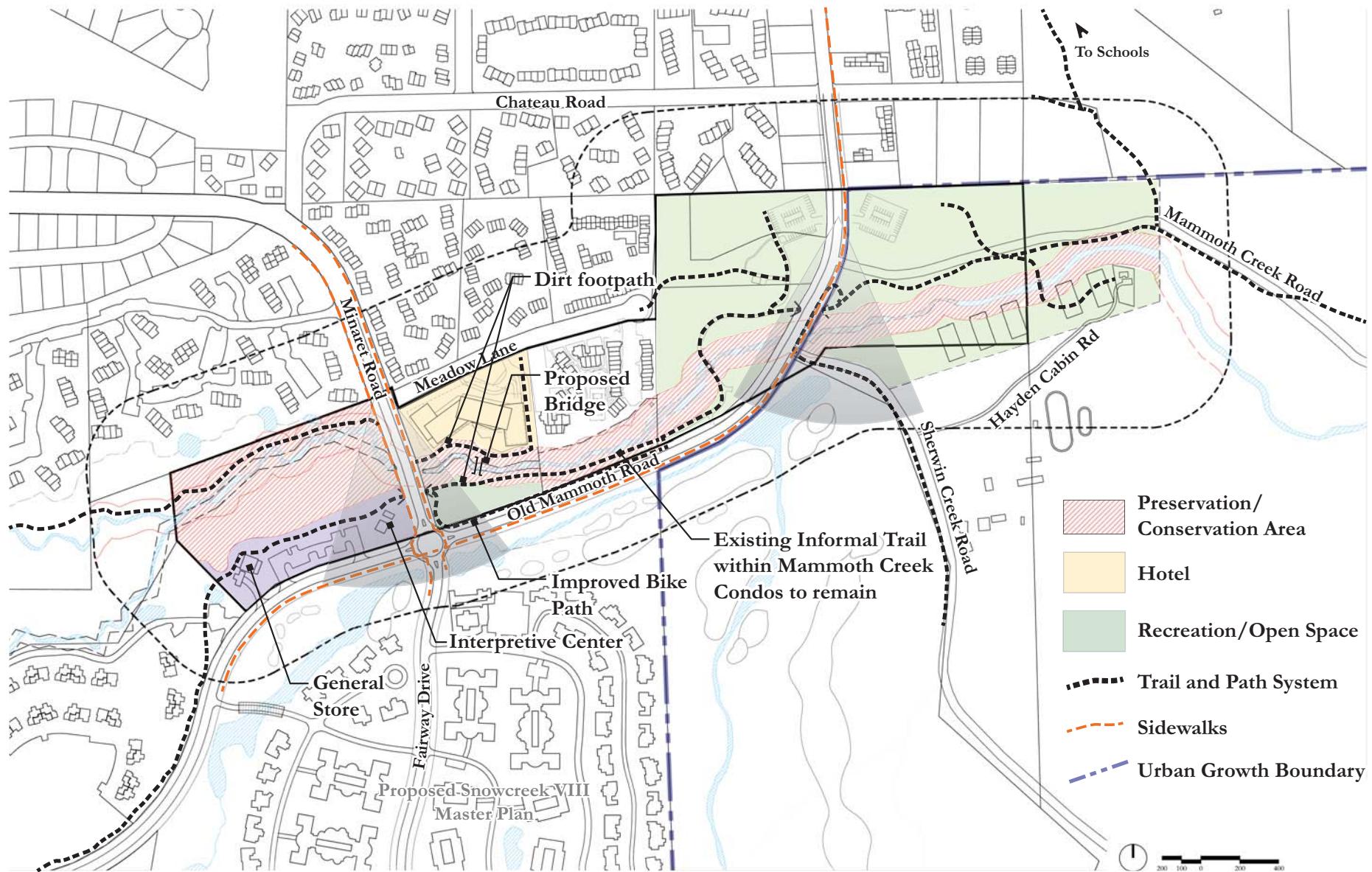


FIGURE 12 – ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED PLANS

### **Alternative 3: Hybrid Plan**

This alternative would represent a series of modifications to various aspects of Alternatives 1 and 2. Interpretive facilities proposed at Snowcreek would be relocated to the Hayden Cabin within Mammoth Creek Park East. The Sherwin proposed hotel would be reduced in height to reflect the height of the background Conifer tree canopy (65 feet). At Mammoth Creek Park recreation facilities would be increased to include some or all of the facilities suggested in the recent Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Some further trails linkages, in addition to those described in Alternative 2, would be provided in this alternative. This would include installation of a 6' boardwalk for pedestrians on the Snowcreek site north of Mammoth Creek, a winter use trail south of Old Mammoth Road and paving of paths to Hayden Cabin at Mammoth Creek Park. The trail on the east side of The Sherwin Hotel proposal as indicated in Alternative 2 is eliminated. This alternative would include heightened creek restoration, including more active efforts to enhance the quality of the creek habitat and vegetation along the length of the corridor within the Study Area. Management efforts would be stepped up in this alternative, reflecting a more coordinated effort between all entities involved – the Town, private property owners, and volunteers. See Figure 13.

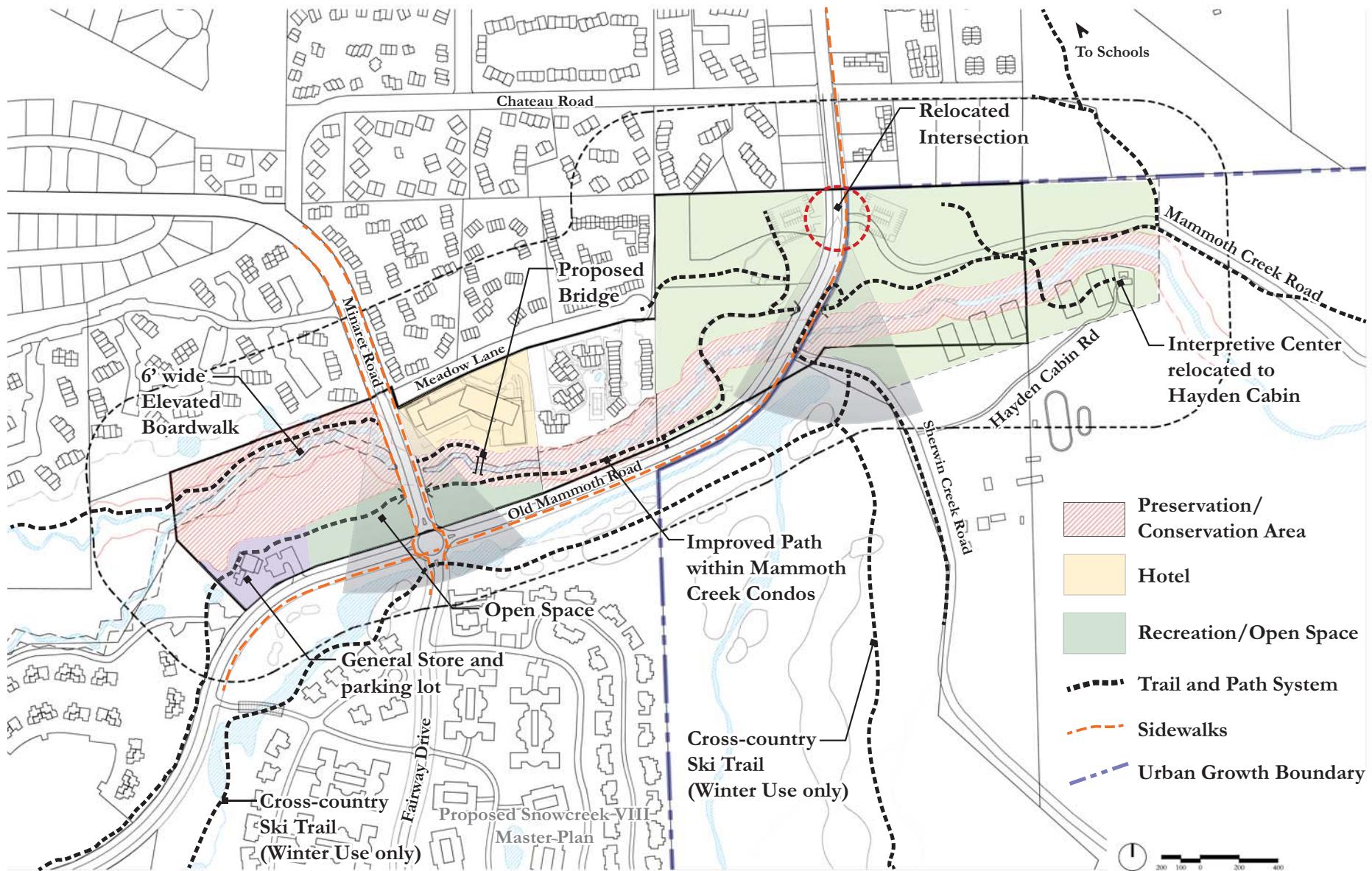


FIGURE 13 – ALTERNATIVE 3: HYBRID PLAN



# *Chapter 6*

## **Plan Recommendations**

This chapter presents a series of Plan recommendations and/or guidelines for the East OSSC Planning Study Area. These recommendations result from a synthesis of the comments received from the Focus Group and Joint Commission meetings on February 13, 2008 that addressed planning issues , existing conditions and opportunities and/or constraints and the meetings on April 28, 2008 that addressed alternative plans especially the Hybrid Plan Alternative as this alternative engendered the most consensus of the participants. City Staff and the consultant team further refined the Hybrid Plan into this recommended plan for Focus Group and Joint Commission review at the meeting scheduled for August 14, 2008. From comments received at this meeting and from City Staff, a Final Draft Plan will be prepared for Planning Commission approval at a meeting to be scheduled in the Fall.

The plan recommendations are organized into a series of topics reflective of the key issue areas previously discussed, namely:

- Land Use and Access
- Vehicular Circulation
- Non Motorized Circulation/Trails
- Recreation
- Creek Restoration
- Urban Design
- Management Responsibility

Where relevant, recommendations are tailored for each subarea or for the Study Area as a whole are presented under each topic below. These recommendations are suggestive only and have been developed to a conceptual level in this Planning Study. Further technical studies, which are beyond the scope of this Planning Study, may be needed to determine details of implementation, funding and management mechanisms.

### **Preferred Plan Overview**

The recommended plan emphasizes conservation of natural landscape and cultural settlement values present in the Study Area. Future development uses and densities would be consistent with the existing General Plan and Zoning, however clustering of development should be promoted to maximize open space preservation. Under the recommended provisions for clustering, new multi-family residential or transient lodging development would be allowed to cluster its density in a building(s) of increased height, up the height of the background conifer tree canopy provided appropriate stepping down of architectural elements are implemented to provide a transition in scale to adjacent buildings. It should be noted that the concept of clustering with increased height was strongly debated by meeting participants with no clear consensus on this issue.



The existing open space creek corridor, its associated Main Path and Mammoth Creek Park are the primary organizing elements of the recommended plan. The recommended plan features a “green spine” of open space and recreation uses along the Mammoth Creek corridor envisioned as a “Great Park.” The backbone of the “green spine” is the Main Path and lateral trail and path connections. The Main Path connects with paths, trails, active and passive recreation venues and destinations. The Main Path is intended to replace the requirement for a sidewalk on the north side of Old Mammoth Road. The Main Path would be cleared of snow during the winter to allow for year round use. The plan includes recommendations for cross country ski and snow shoeing trails.

Mammoth Creek Park would remain the focus of active recreation within the Study Area, serving to bookend the more urban and commercial uses along Old Mammoth Road to the north and provide a community and visitor venue. The plan capitalizes on the existing Hayden Cabin in Mammoth Creek Park as a focus for natural resource and historic interpretive activities and would continue to build upon other recreation uses in accordance with existing plans. A new parking lot and trail/x-country ski staging area is recommended for Mammoth Creek East. Access to this new parking lot would be via a planned four-way intersection with the new leg being east of the existing access to the parking lot in Mammoth Creek West.

There are numerous recommendations regarding the conservation and restoration of the natural character of Mammoth Creek. Included in Appendix F is a recommended plant list for the riparian and upland zones within the 50' setback area of the Creek, also referred to as an “Enhanced Riparian Landscape Zone.”

The plan envisions retaining and enhancing the rural character of the existing arterials and local roads, although improved sidewalks would be encouraged to support pedestrian access from Snowcreek, Mammoth Creek Condominium Community and The Sherwin. It is recommended that Sherwin Creek Road and the access road to Hayden Cabin, herein referred to as the Hayden Cabin Road, be paved within the Study Area. Mammoth Creek Road is relocated to extend from the eastern terminus of Chateau Road. Access would continue to be controlled during the winter season. All parking would be off-street.

A comprehensive management plan is recommended to define the responsibilities for capital improvements and maintenance. In general, each property owner would be responsible for capital improvements on their property, generally as a condition of plan approval. The Town would be responsible for capital improvements in publically owned property and within the public access easement at the Mammoth Creek Condominiums property. A consortium formed of property owners, the Town and volunteers will be responsible for maintenance.



# Land Use and Access

See Figure 14

## Subarea 1—Snowcreek VIII Parcel

**Land Use Recommendation 1:** The currently proposed Snowcreek VIII Master Plan Update includes a General Store and an Interpretive Center on this parcel south of the meadow and creek. However, the consensus of the East OSSC Planning Study workshops was that the interpretive center would be more appropriately located within Mammoth Creek Park at the Hayden Cabin. These meetings provided strong support for the conservation of open space, recreation and visual values along the length of the Mammoth Creek Corridor. Therefore, it is recommended that this area be used for open space and recreation as envisioned in the existing 1981 Snowcreek Master Plan. A separate Neighborhood District Plan process is underway for the Snowcreek district. The results of that study should ultimately be used to determine the most appropriate location of the General Store in the context of the broader planning issues considered as part of that NDP.

**Rationale:** The Snowcreek parcel should remain in open space in order to meet the directives of the OSSC overlay as they relate to view protection, and conservation of open space and natural resource values of the existing meadow and creek corridor.

## Subarea 2—The Sherwin Parcel

**Land Use Recommendation 2:** Residential or transient lodging as permitted by RMF-2 zoning designation should be clustered in the area north of the creek corridor. The area south and inclusive of the creek corridor should be open space and recreation use. Allowable intensity and density per the Town's General Plan should be allowed to be thoughtfully placed based on the natural conditions of the lot from the southern portion of the parcel to the northern portion adjacent to Meadow Lane. The height of the clustered development should not exceed the background 65 foot conifer tree canopy as observed from The Sherwin Meadow to the south. The design of the new development should take into account compatibility and scale transition to the adjacent Mammoth Creek Condominiums. This transition may be accomplished by the incorporation of architectural elements that step down to 35' or less to the adjacent Mammoth Creek Condominium Community.

See Figure 15—section describing transition between Subareas 2 and 3. Access to the development should be from two curb cuts on Meadow Lane. One-way circulation through porte-cochere is encouraged. The creek corridor should be utilized for open space and recreation use.

**Rationale:** Clustered development on the northern part of the site adjacent to Meadow Lane is preferable to development on both the northern and southern parcels, since it would more effectively preserve the view corridor of the Sherwin range from Minaret Road as included in the Town's General Plan. The southern area should be retained in open space use to be consistent with the goals of the OSSC “....to protect sensitive stream and drainage courses from development, to recognize and preserve these environmentally sensitive areas as a community resource, and to protect water quality and preserve wetland habitat.” In addition, public view corridors of the Sherwin Range and Mammoth Mountain from Minaret Road and Old Mammoth Road would be preserved with clustering.

**Note:** There was no clear concensus on clustering development with attendant height increase.

## Subarea 3—Mammoth Creek Condominium Community Parcel

**Land Use Recommendation 3:** The existing land use of Mammoth Creek Condominium community should remain as is. However, should redevelopment occur, Subarea 3 should be allowed the same intensity and density, consistent with the provisions allowing for clustering of density and resultant heights, as the adjacent Subarea 2.

## Subarea 4 and 5—Mammoth Creek Park, East and West

**Land Use Recommendation 4:** Mammoth Creek Park should be public open space and recreation use, as defined in the existing 1990 Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan, or as subsequently amended through adoption of the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan (See Recreation Recommendation #4)

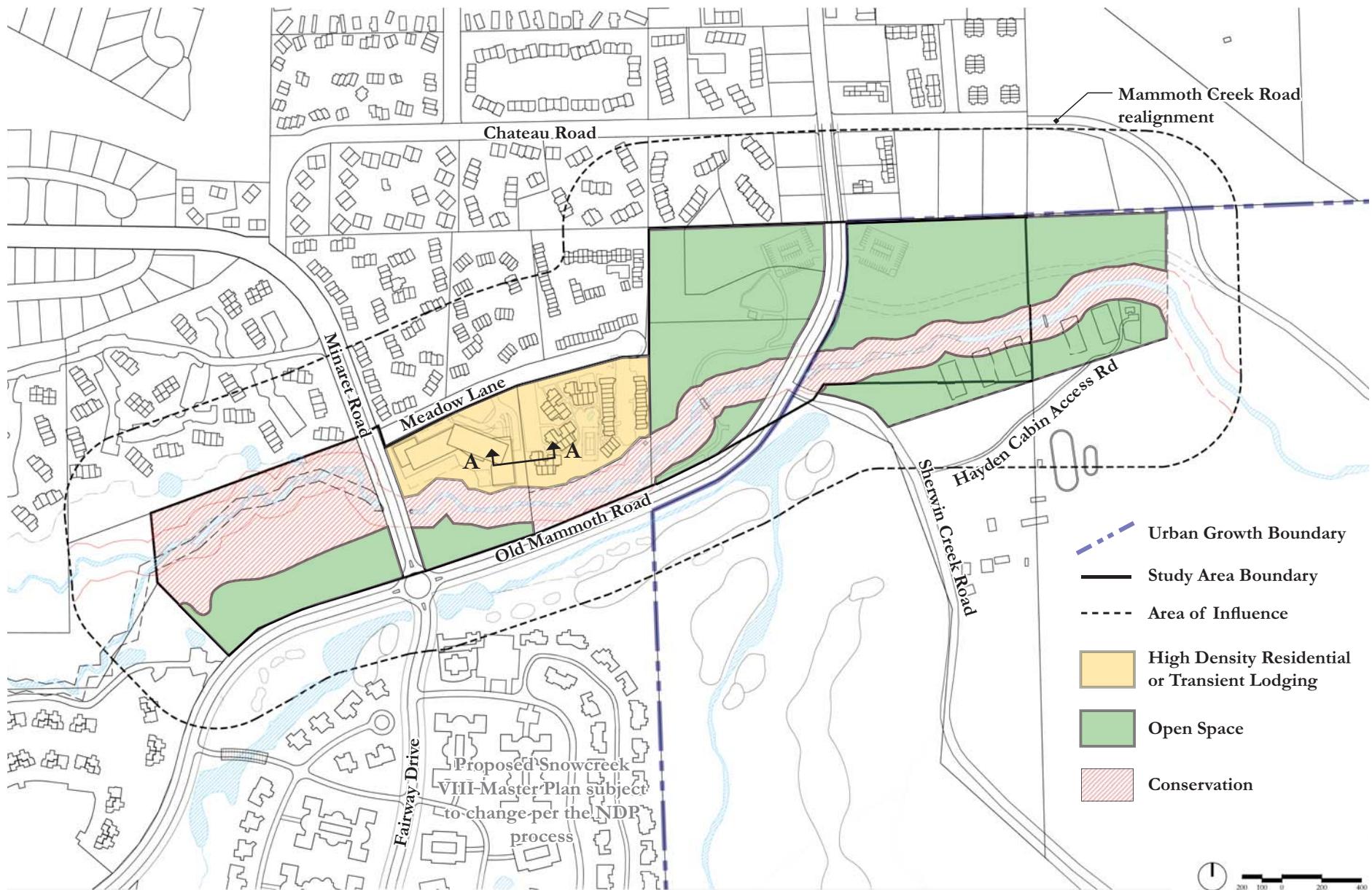


FIGURE 14 – RECOMMENDED LAND USE AND ACCESS PLAN

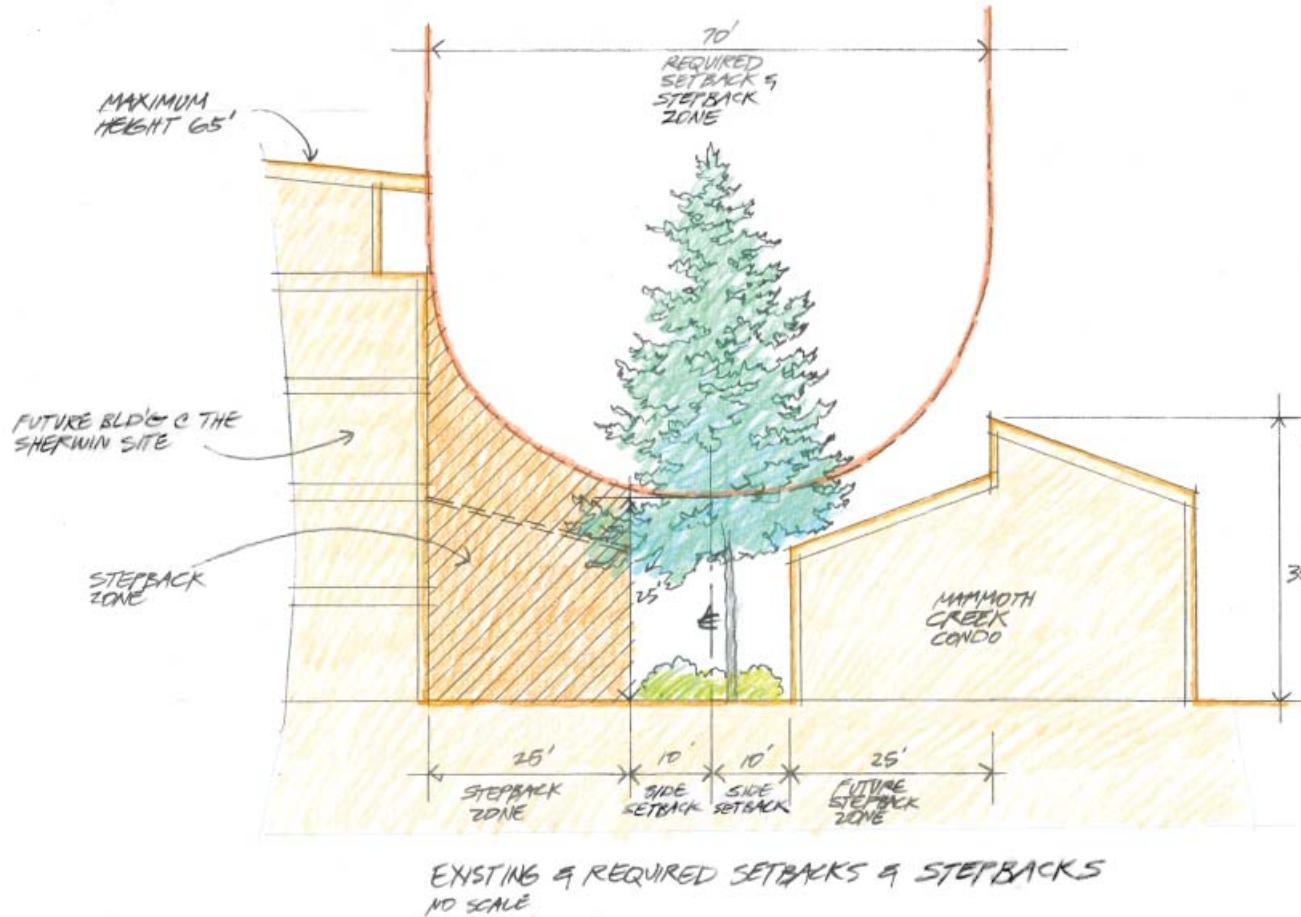


FIGURE 15 – SECTION A-A  
EXISTING SIDE YARD SETBACKS AND  
RECOMMENDED SIDE YARD SETBACKS



# Circulation Element

See Figure 16

## District-wide

**Circulation Element Recommendation 1:** A roundabout should be constructed at the intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road in conjunction with development of the Snowcreek VIII project. An underpass for the main trail should be provided across Minaret Road in conjunction with the roundabout.

**Rationale:** The creation of open space at the key intersection of these two arteries provides a sense of arrival for the southern side of town.



**Circulation Recommendation 2:** The existing staggered intersections of the existing access road to the parking lot in Mammoth Creek Park West and to the future parking lot and trail staging area on the Mammoth Creek Park East should be reconfigured to create a standard four-way intersection, to be implemented at the time of future improvements to the Park.

**Rationale:** A single four-way intersection is safer than two “T” intersections. In addition, a four-way intersection would facilitate more efficient parking signage and directional access by a single control officer during large events.

**Circulation Recommendation 3:** Sherwin Creek Road should be paved to the proposed propane tank farm site in conjunction with development of the Tank Farm. Paving should be in accordance with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) approval/permits and include provisions for snow removal and maintenance as agreed to by USFS, the Town and private property owners as needed.

**Circulation Recommendation 4:** The access road to Hayden Cabin should be paved and realigned to provide improved parking and access as indicated in the Town’s 1990 Parks and Recreation Element of the 1987 General Plan as amended.

**Rationale:** Improvements to this road would provide for better access and parking to improved/enhanced interpretive uses at the Hayden Cabin.

**Circulation Recommendation 5:** Chateau Road should be extended from its existing eastern terminus to connect with Mammoth Creek Road east of Mammoth Creek Park East. A suggested (conceptual) alignment is illustrated in Figure 14. Access would continue to be controlled during the winter season. Implementation of this recommendation would be contingent on the results of more detailed traffic and engineering studies, and identification of a suitable funding mechanism, as well as appropriate coordination with the USFS. The section of Mammoth Creek Road between the new intersection and Old Mammoth Road should be removed and disturbed area restored. Pedestrian access would be provided along the existing Main Path segment in this area.

**Circulation Recommendation 6:** A new bus stop should be installed at the southeast corner of Minaret Road and Meadow Lane.

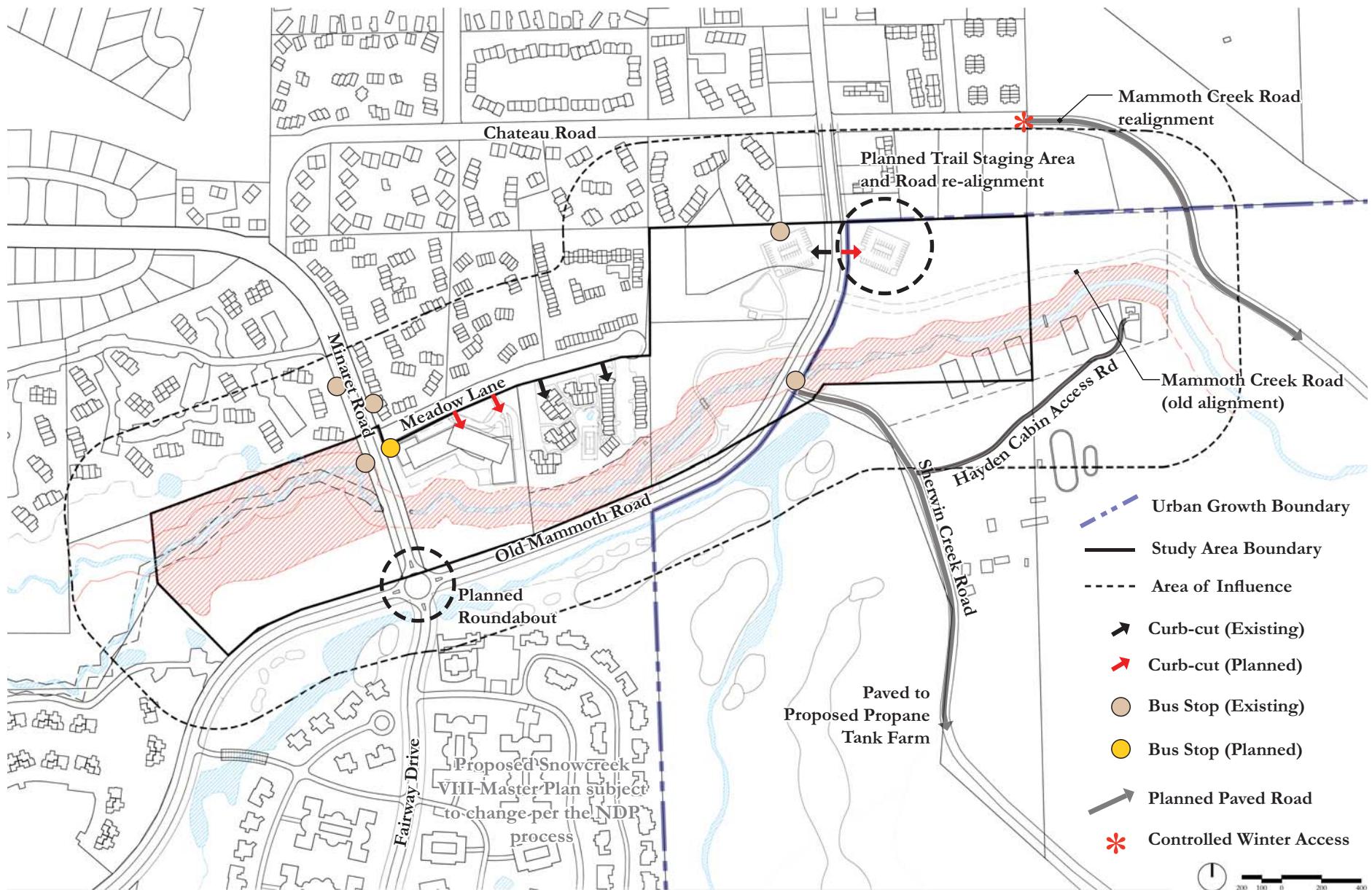


FIGURE 16 – RECOMMENDED CIRCULATION (MOTORIZED) PLAN

# Non-Motorized Circulation/Trails Element

See Figure 17

## Subarea 1: Snowcreek VIII Parcel

**Trail Recommendation 1:** A proposed 8' wide segment of Main Path located south of Mammoth Creek is under construction. It is planned to extend easterly under Minaret Road via an underpass. The existing dirt trail north of the creek should be replaced with a 6-foot wide elevated wooden boardwalk to be located on the north side of the creek within the 40' public access easement.

**Rationale:** A raised wooden boardwalk would formalize a single path of travel across the meadow and avoid creation of multiple dirt trails that have greater impacts to habitat values of the meadow.

**Note:** The concept of improvements to the dirt trail north of the creek was debated and opposed by nearby existing Snowcreek property owners.



## Subarea 2: The Sherwin Parcel

**Trail Recommendation 2:** The continuation of the multi-use Main Path should be located off street in an alignment selected to minimize impact to the creek and to maximize open space and landscape values between the path and Old Mammoth Road. A pedestrian footbridge should be added to promote easy and safe access across Mammoth Creek for all seasons.

## Subarea 3: Mammoth Creek Condominium Community Parcel

**Trail Recommendation 3:** The multi-use Main Path should be located off street and aligned to minimize the impact to the creek and maximize open space and landscape values between the path and Old Mammoth Road.

## Subarea 4: Mammoth Creek Park West

**Trail Recommendation 4:** The multi-use Main Path should be constructed to Meadow Lane from the existing Mammoth Creek Park West parking lot.

## Subarea 5: Mammoth Creek Park East

**Trail Recommendation 5:** The multi-use path should be constructed from the Main path to Hayden Cabin utilizing the existing bridge.

## District-wide

**Trail Recommendation 6:** The Main Path alignment should follow the general alignment of the existing dirt trail, which may be within the 50' OHWM setback area, but is generally outside any wetland or steep slope areas.

**Trail Recommendation 7:** All sidewalks within the Study Area indicated in the Town's 2003 Sidewalk Master Plan should be implemented, however, the single sidewalk required by the plan on Old Mammoth Road should be located on the south side west of Sherwin Creek Road.

**Rationale:** A sidewalk on the south side of Old Mammoth Road would provide pedestrian circulation for Snowcreek residents. The main path serves a pedestrian access need on the north side of Old Mammoth Road.

**Trail Recommendation 8:** A winter cross-country ski trail should be considered for location either on the planned sidewalk on the south side of Old Mammoth Road or in the Snowcreek golf course. The location and alignment of this trail should be as determined through the Snowcreek NDP process.

**Trail Recommendation 9:** The existing on-street bike lanes should be retained primarily for road bikers.

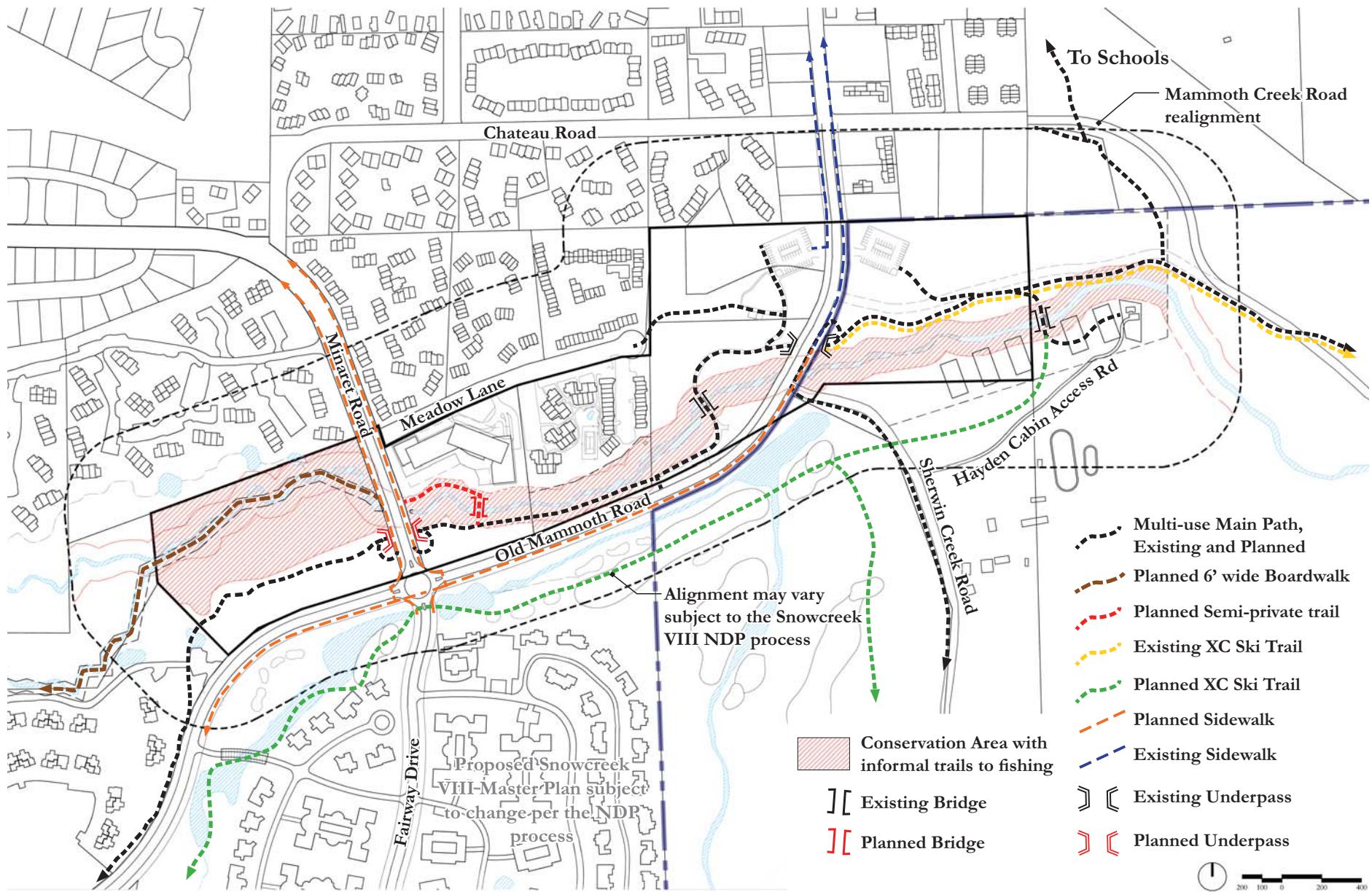


FIGURE 17 – RECOMMENDED CIRCULATION (NON-MOTORIZED) PLAN

## Recreation Element

See Figure 18

### Subarea 1—Snowcreek VIII Parcel

**Recreation Recommendation 1:** Recreation uses on the Snowcreek VIII parcel north of Mammoth Road should be limited to passive activities.

**Rationale:** Limited passive recreation is the most appropriate type for this private property in order to protect the meadow area for habitat conservation and respect neighboring residential uses.

### Subarea 2—The Sherwin Parcel

**Recreation Recommendation 2:** Recreation uses on the Sherwin parcel should be limited to fishing and passive uses on the area south of the multi-use Main Path and creek corridor. Passive recreation uses should be buffered by landscaping north of Old Mammoth Road.

### Subarea 3—Mammoth Creek Condominium Parcel

**Recreation Recommendation 3:** No additional recreation uses should be allowed in the creek corridor except for passive uses including fishing and the multi-use Main Path, due to the limited width and area available.

### Subarea 4—Mammoth Creek Park East and West

**Recreation Recommendation 4:** Future recreation uses should conform to those identified in the 1990 Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan, or as subsequently amended through adoption of the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Uses being considered include a new trail staging area, sports fields, tennis courts, picnic tables, dog park and possible event venues.

**Recreation Recommendation 5:** Consider limiting fishing within the boundaries of Mammoth Creek Park to children under the age of 12, with adult supervision, to encourage this resource and amenity as a “children-friendly” fishing location.



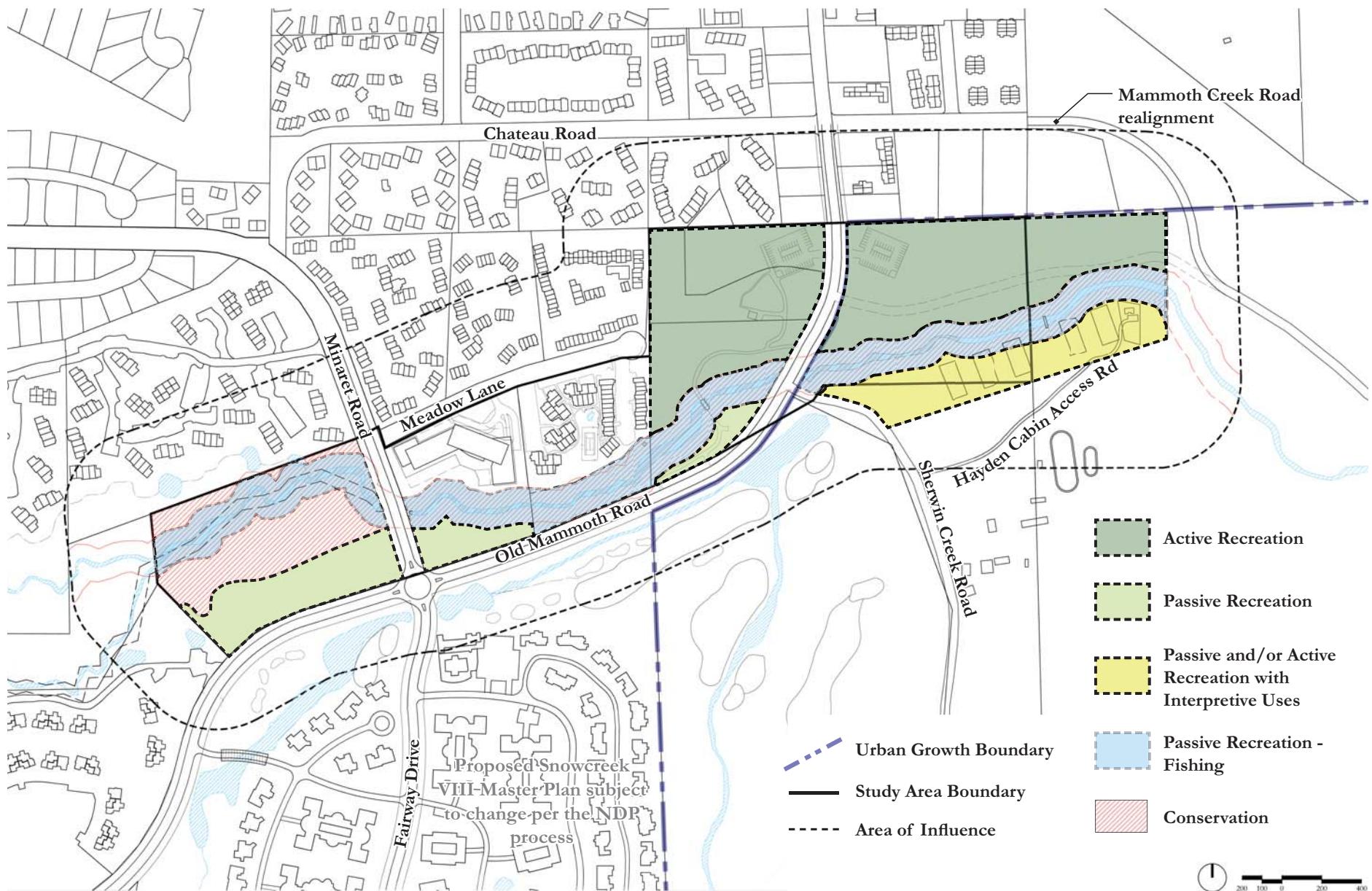


FIGURE 18 – RECOMMENDED RECREATION PLAN

# Creek Restoration Element

See Figure 19

## District-wide

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 1:** Permanent irrigated landscape should be prohibited within the 50 foot setback from the OHWM of Mammoth Creek within the OSSC zone. However, temporary irrigation may be permitted to support establishment of native landscaping in this zone.

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 2:** Use of native landscape materials appropriate to the riparian and upland zone should be required for future restoration efforts within the 50' setback from the OHWM of Mammoth Creek within OSSC zone. A list of recommended native plants may be found in the Appendix F. See Figure 17 for location of Enhanced Riparian Landscape Zone.

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 3:** Pruning and alteration of native riparian vegetation within the 50' setback from the OHWM of Mammoth Creek within the OSSC zone should be regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game in accordance with CDFG's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, Section 1600.

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 4:** Improvements to existing (informal) dirt trails within the 50' setback of the OHWM of Mammoth Creek should be limited. Where these trails have been compacted and roots exposed, "slabs" of granite should be installed as both stepping stones and an armoring device to prevent further compaction. Random placement and patterning of slabs filled with native soil is recommended to maintain a natural appearance. If the Town were to implement a re-vegetation or creek habitat management program in the future, this plan should seek to eliminate redundant or underutilized informal footpaths, and to re-orient trails away from undercut creek banks.

**Rationale:** This Recommendation is formulated to minimize compaction of streamside soils, and conserve habitat consistent with existing Regional Water Control Board and US Forest Service policies formulated under the Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 5:** The deposition of plowed snow from adjacent roadways and hardscape areas should be prohibited within the 50' setback from the OHWM of Mammoth Creek within the OSSC zone. Blown snow may be deposited in this area, provided that the multi-use Main Path remains clear and landscape materials are not damaged.

**Rationale:** This Recommendation is to protect existing and planned vegetation and associated habitat and visual values in the OSSC zone, and facilitate maintenance of the Main Path as a cleared walkway during the winter.

**Creek Restoration Recommendation 6:** Trash receptacles should be placed at the following locations:

- One at the west end of Mammoth Creek Park West.
- One at the east end of Mammoth Creek Condo easement.
- One at the west end of Mammoth Creek Condo easement.
- One at the west end of the trail alignment near Minaret Road intersection.

Signage tied to stream interpretation and litter control should be placed within the 50 foot setback at the following general locations:

- One at the west end of Mammoth Creek Park – west.
- One at the west end of the Mammoth Creek Condo easement.
- One near Minaret Road intersection.



TUFTED HAIRGRASS



SILVER LUPINE



BLUEGRASS



WOOLY SUNFLOWER



WAX CURRENT



LODGEPOLE PINE



SILVER LUPINE



WESTERN WATER BIRCH



SEDGE



WILLOW



ROCKY MTN. IRIS



SEDGE



QUAKING ASPEN



MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY

# Urban Design Element

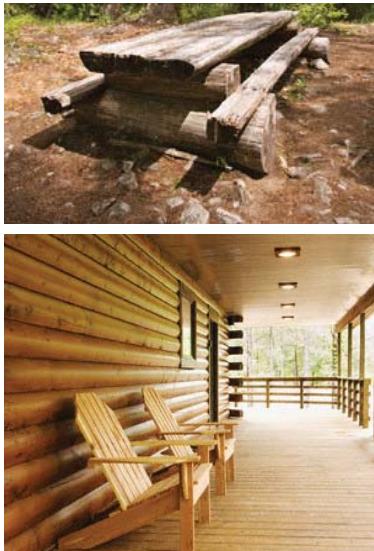
See Figure 19

## District-wide

### Urban Design Recommendation 1 – the following design guidelines should be implemented:

- The rural visual landscape values and character of the existing streetscapes in the study areas designated “Enhanced Streetscape Zones” should be conserved and improved to convey the special “visual signature” of the Study Area. See street sections B-B and C-C in Figures 20 and 21, respectively.
- View corridors of the Sherwin Range, Mammoth Mountain and White Mountains from public vista points on Old Mammoth Road and Minaret Road should be conserved.
- All signage except for directional signage should be pedestrian-oriented and scaled.

- Any private monumentation and signage should maintain an unobtrusive visual character that is complementary to and harmonious with the existing natural landscape values.
- All lighting except intersection safety lighting should be designed and shielded to protect the night sky values, per the requirements of the Town’s General Plan and lighting ordinance.
- All street furniture and signage should be durable, utilize a consistent design vocabulary (to be determined), and maintain an unobtrusive visual character that is complementary to and harmonious with the natural landscape values.
- Building design, colors and materials for new development should be consistent with the Town’s existing design guidelines.



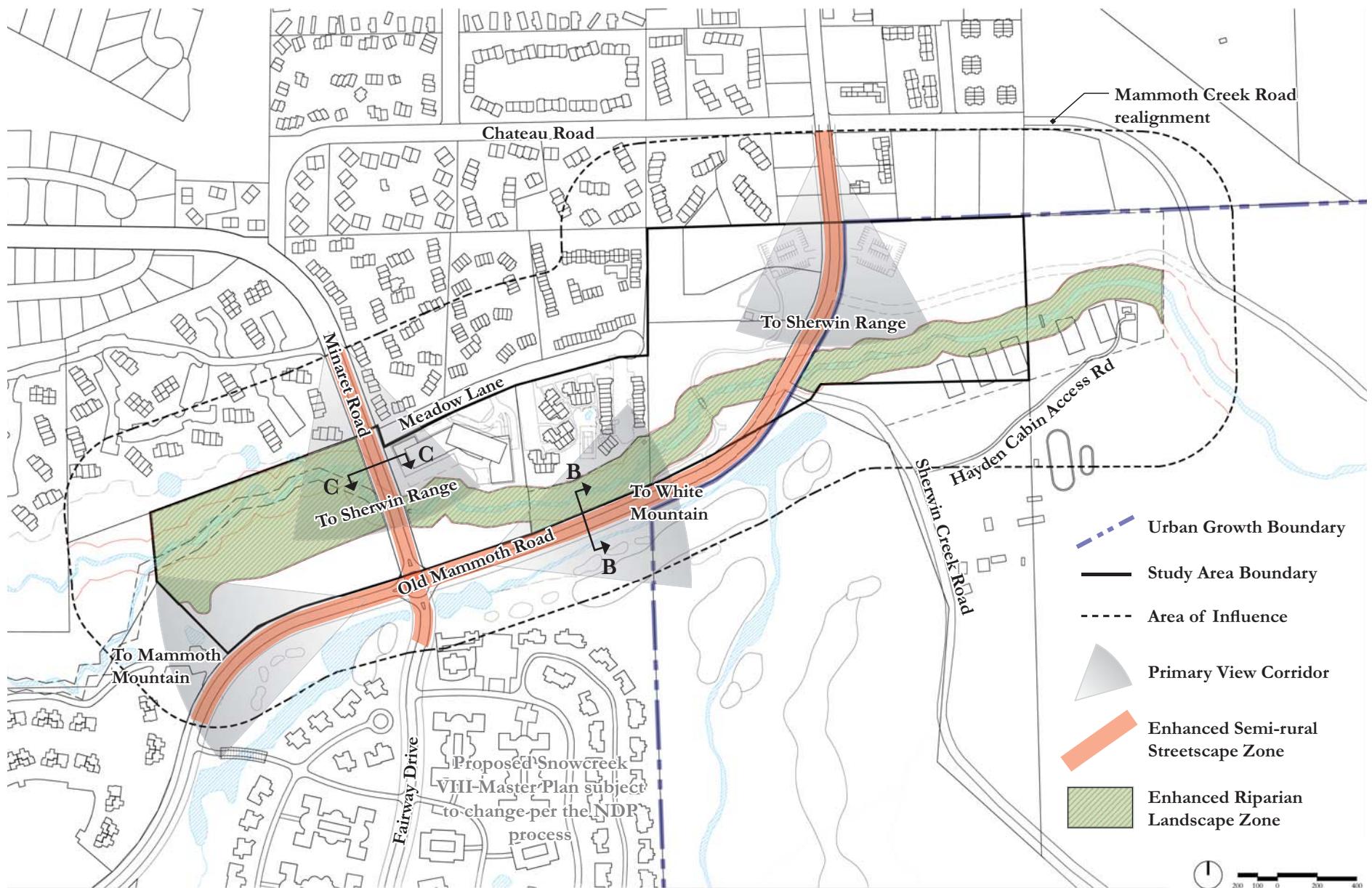


FIGURE 19 – RECOMMENDED CREEK RESTORATION AND URBAN DESIGN PLAN

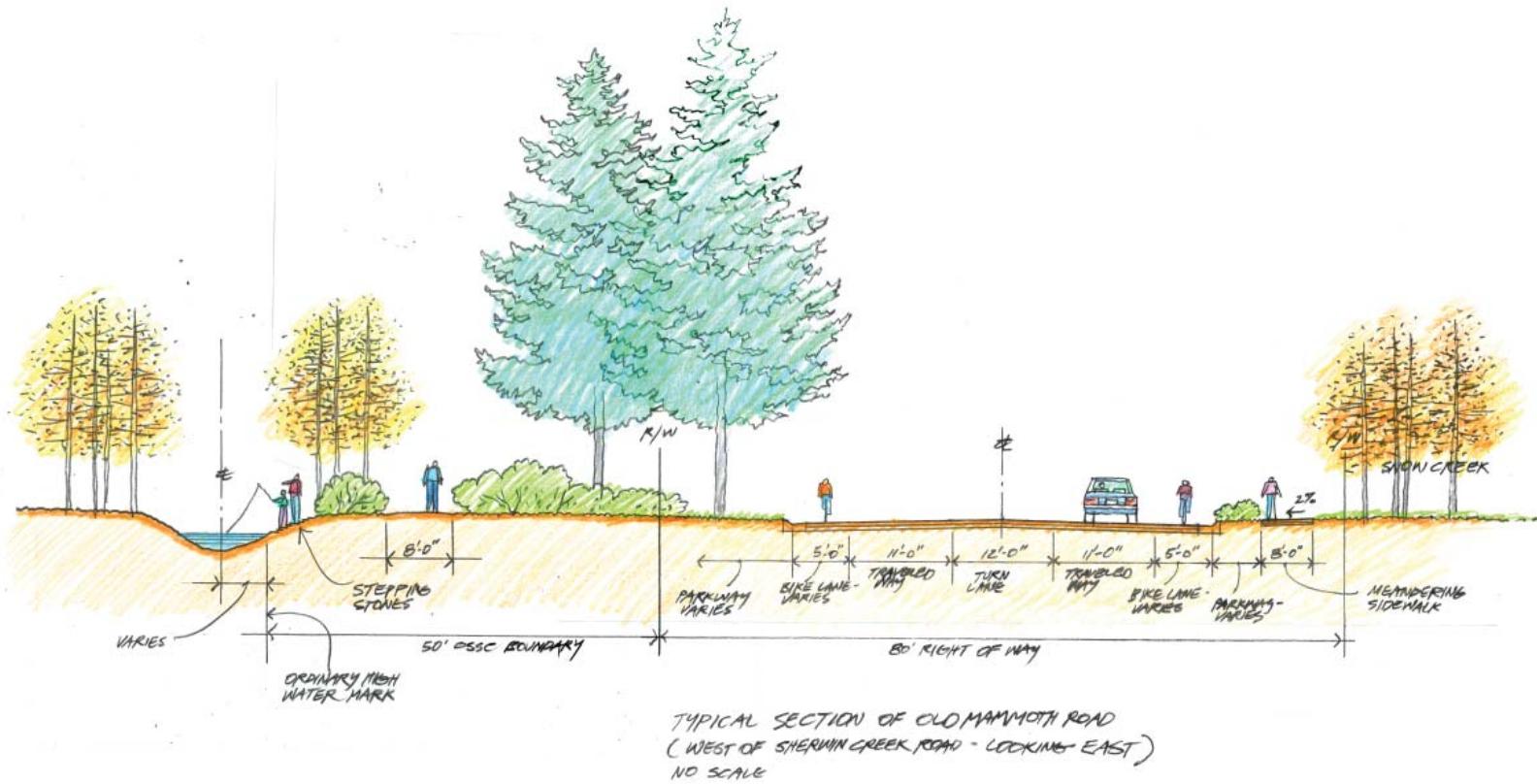


FIGURE 20 – SECTION B-B  
TYPICAL SECTION OF OLD MAMMOTH ROAD  
(WEST OF SHERWIN CREEK ROAD – LOOKING EAST)

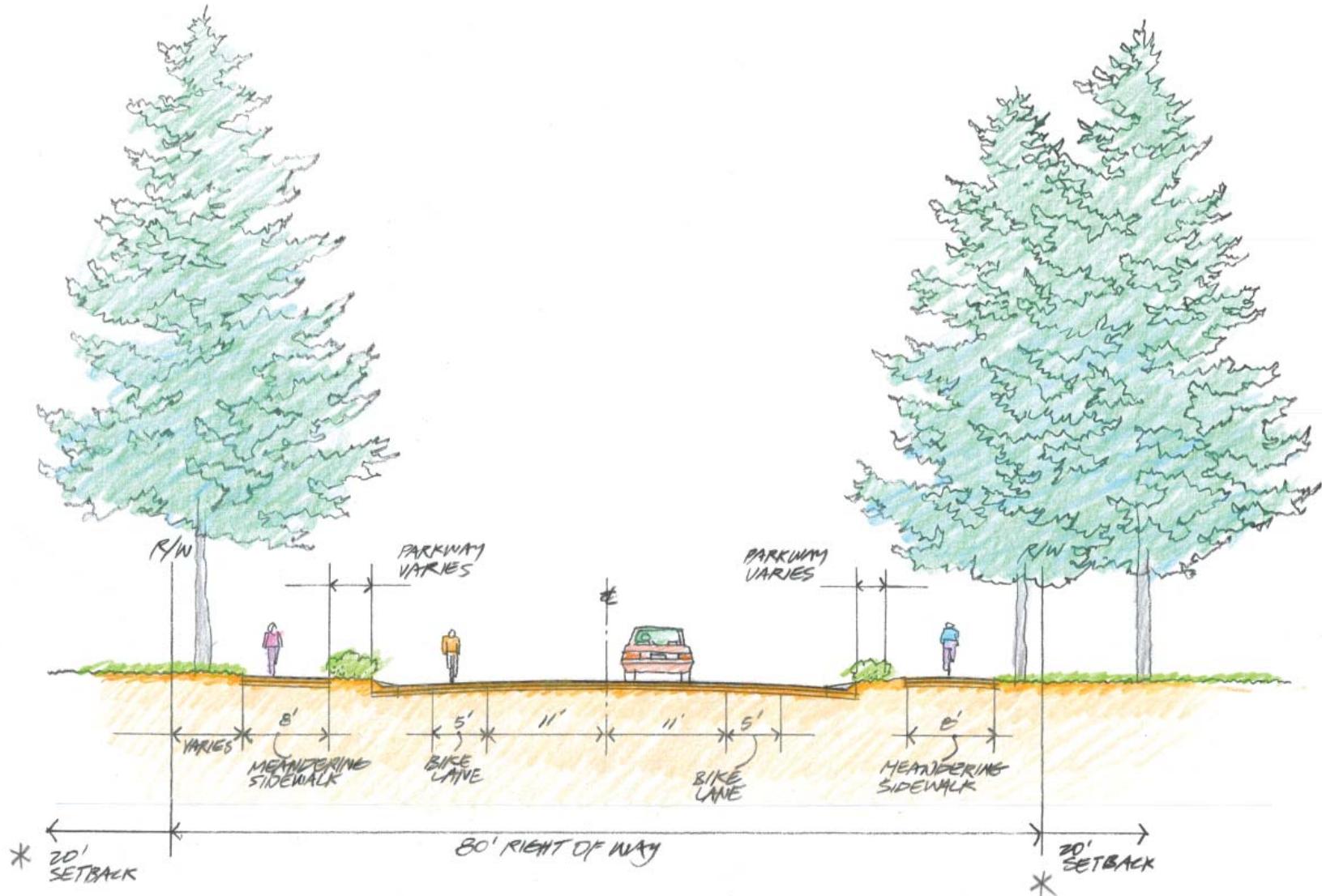


FIGURE 21 – SECTION C-C  
TYPICAL SECTION OF MINARET ROAD  
(SOUTH OF CHATEAU ROAD – LOOKING SOUTH)

# Management Responsibility Element

## District-wide

**Management Responsibility Recommendation 1:** Implementation of roadway, trail and landscape capital improvements recommended herein that are within Snowcreek and The Sherwin subareas should be the responsibility of the developer, and to be implemented when future project development is scheduled. In other subareas, implementation of improvements recommended herein should be the responsibility of the Town as can be supported with available financial and staff resources.

**Management Responsibility Recommendation 2:** The Town should work to implement a mechanism to fund and coordinate trail management and maintenance, such as an assessment district. Cost of trail system management and maintenance should be equitably borne by the Town and property owners, with support of volunteer efforts.







# *Appendix*

- A. Relevant General Plan Policies**
- B. Meeting Minutes #1**
- C. Meeting Minutes #2**
- D. Meeting Minutes #3**
- E. Meeting Minutes #4**
- F. Native Plant List – Mammoth Creek OSSC Zone**
- G. References**
- H. Credits**

## A. Relevant Planning Policies

### Community Vision

- I. Sustainability and continuity of our unique relationship with the natural environment.
- 5. Protecting the surrounding natural environment
- 7. Offering a variety of transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience and alternatives to use of personal vehicles with a strong pedestrian emphasis.

### Economy

- E.2. Achieve sustainable tourism by building on the area's natural beauty, recreational, cultural, and historic assets.

### Arts, Culture, Heritage And Natural History

- A.I. Be stewards of Mammoth's unique natural environment.
- A.2. Be a vibrant cultural center by weaving arts and local heritage and the area's unique natural history into everyday life.
- A.3. Encourage public art and cultural expression throughout the community.

### Community Design

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

### Mobility

- M.1. Develop and implement a townwide way-finding system.
- M.3. Emphasize feet first, public transportation second, and car last in planning the community transportation system while still meeting Level of Service standards.
- M.4. Encourage feet first by providing a linked year-round recreational and commuter trail system that is safe and comprehensive.
- M.7. Maintain and improve safe and efficient movement of people, traffic, and goods in a manner consistent with the feet first initiative

### Parks, Open Space And Recreation

- P.1. Maintain parks and open space within and adjacent to town for outdoor recreation and contemplation.
- P.2. Provide additional parks within town.
- P.3. Create a Master Plan for an integrated trail system that will maintain and enhance convenient public access to public lands from town.
- P.4. Provide and encourage a wide variety of outdoor and indoor recreation readily accessible to residents and visitors of all ages.
- P.5. Link parks and open space with a well-designed year round network of public corridors and trails within and surrounding Mammoth Lakes.

### Resource Management And Conservation

- R.1. Be stewards of habitat, wildlife, fisheries, forests and vegetation resources of significant biological, ecological, aesthetic and recreational value.
- R.2. Maintain a healthy regional natural ecosystem and provide stewardship for wetlands, wet meadows and riparian areas from development-related impacts.
- R.3. Preserve and enhance the exceptional natural, scenic and recreational value of Mammoth Creek.
- R.4. Conserve and enhance the quality and quantity of Mammoth Lakes' water resources.
- R.5. Minimize erosion and sedimentation.

## B. Meeting Minutes #1

Project: East OSSC Study Area, Mammoth Creek

Meeting Notes Date: Thursday, 21-Feb-08

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 13-Feb-08

Meeting Subject: East OSSC Study Area, Public Workshop

Meeting Location: Mammoth Lakes, CA

### Items Discussed in Focus Group:

1. There was discussion that the defined district corridor was too small but allowed it to be focused and pertinent to the issues. Several people thought that the whole GP Mammoth Creek Stream Study should be included in OSSC Study.
2. Adjacent property (condo) owners were concerned about guests from new development using trails to access their property.
3. There was a lot of discussion about maintenance of the current and proposed creek path. Concern about who is (and will be) maintaining the current and proposed trails.
4. Many participants talked about the excessive garbage that is left behind along the creek corridor currently. It was agreed that the local residents of Mammoth who go down to the creek to fish are to blame for this.
5. Most agreed that a shared maintenance program of public and private resources would be preferred.
6. Most agreed that there was a need for better educating the creek users about the creek and the damage caused by the litter and dog droppings left behind. Helping them understand how to use the open space responsibly.
7. There was discussion about how access to the creek corridor is to be controlled.
8. There was disagreement as to how much access to the creek corridor is to be allowed. Adjacent homeowners wanted to limit all access to creek to just the property owners. Many of the local residents wanted a responsible trail system that helps preserve and restore the creek.
9. Many of the local residence would like to see a safe trail system for the school children. Consensus was reached that a bike trail for the

children to travel to school should be provided and that in general the trail system needs to address health and safety issues for all trail users.

10. The need for the trails to be usable in all four seasons was discussed.
11. It was highlighted that the community must be linked to foster feet first and address commuters from Old Mammoth.
12. The incorporation of cross country ski trails was discussed. Participant's referred to discussions from Camp Winter and expressed interest in winter trails that used the snow as a medium for travel instead of moving the snow out of the way (ie. Cross country skiing, snowshoe, etc).
13. Many participants would like to see the snow storage locations better defined.
14. The purpose of the trails was widely discussed and debated. Some wanted the trails to provide a way to pass through the area and others wanted the trails to provide an opportunity for the user to stay a while. General discussion about whether the trails should be simply a way to pass through the area or provide more educational information or create a destination that is sensitive to the natural environment. Opinions seemed to be equally divided.
15. Adjacent property (Condo) owners wanted an easement along the creek to be strictly defined and have restricted use to their owners.
16. Adjacent property (Condo) owners wanted a capacity limit for the planned paths if they are installed. This triggered a discussion about how this capacity limit would be monitored.
17. Most participants agreed that the Creek was to maintain a natural feeling and any trail or amenities to be proposed needed to blend in with the natural environment.
18. Some participants wanted the creek to be an amenity and highlight for all residents and visitors not just the surrounding condos.
19. The adjacent property (Condo) owners voiced concern that they don't want people walking on trails to be able to look into their units.
20. The adjacent property (Condo) owners do not want to see more people walking by their property.
21. General concern about how non residents and residents will use the trail system. Questioning/discussion if they have different needs.
22. There was discussion about the overall treatment of the corridor. Preservation vs. Restoration vs. doing nothing to the corridor. Most of the participants wanted the corridor to be restored and acknowledged that the corridor had been mistreated over the years.

- 23. Some Participants pointed out that there had been unauthorized thinning of the creek's vegetation. There was concern about regulating this and having a plan to stop this kind of unauthorized action.
- 24. General consensus that whatever is done within the corridor that design looks "natural".
- 25. General discussion about what restoration and preservation really mean. There seems to be a general misunderstanding of what these terms really mean.
- 26. Several participants showed an interest in celebrating the cultural and historic resources of the area in educational signage.
- 27. General consensus that the Haydn Cabin and Museum be more accessible and could provide a better location for the Snowcreek interpretive center and other opportunities for amenities.
- 28. Utilization of the Sherwin Creek Rd was discussed.
- 29. Strong need for a portal from Corridor to National Forest was identified.
- 30. Public art was discussed to be minimal and done in a natural way.
- 31. We concluded the discussions by acknowledging that while there were some items the people agreed on there were many areas that they were in disagreement.

## **East OSSC Planning Study Planning Commission Workshop 02-13-08**

Comments from Commission and other attendee's:

- Incorporate GP Mammoth Creek Study Criteria in OSSC Study
- Planning for corridor should uphold conservation goals for OS Corridor
- Native plantings should be incorporated
- How does trail cross Minaret?
- Unobtrusive signage – consider winter conditions.
- Meadow/Creek corridor is most important area in Town after Mammoth Mountain
- Fix the "dead end" of trail system and create year-round connectivity
- Year round use is critical to trail system
- Future private development should keep corridor open to the public

- Keep public feel/openness
- Less a destination – more a corridor/transition function
- Creek kept natural; some brush clearing
- The creek is the attraction; its habitat is the main concern – protect it.
- Address trash; golf balls – better management not more visitation
- Creek Corridor shouldn't be destination
- Study area should possibly be expanded from Twin Lakes to Highway 395
- Trail system should be unified throughout corridor to have minimal impact. One type of trail should be a boardwalk above ground for minimal impact.
- Plans for Mammoth Creek Park should be completed as part of this corridor work.
- The creek is "Just a creek" and should stay that way
- Fish & Game/agency permitting needs to occur for anything in creek corridor
- Incorporate MCWD/bypass flow studies
  - Overall Creek Corridor strategy
- SWRCB/LADWP decision may impose constraints
- Focused/single trail to concentrate use
- Residents should educate themselves on the GP for their town
- Alternative should consider open space/conservation on whole Sherwin site
- Cultural resource/history should be highlighted
- Dog park at Mammoth Creek Park
- Improve water quality, health of creek for water supply should be concern

## C. Meeting Minutes #2

Project: East OSSC Study Area, Mammoth Creek

Meeting Notes Date: Friday, 08-May-08

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 30-Apr-08

Meeting Subject: East OSSC Study Area Focus Group & Joint Commission Meeting

Meeting Location: Mammoth Lakes, CA

### Focus Group Meeting Minutes

Introduction: Town Planning Staff

Presentation of Alternatives and Meeting Facilitation: VITA

#### General Comments:

1. Remove Future Road Connection shown on Snowcreek VIII Property from all drawings; not necessary to address in this district study.
2. Remove C-Country Trail on Snowcreek VIII existing and future golf course on all drawings for similar reasons.
3. Remove sidewalk on south side of OMR. (TOML to check source of this map element).
4. Note all data sources for roads, trails, etc. on the Mobility Map.
5. Indicate trails as public or private, especially in reference to trail in Snowcreek 1, 2 & 3.
6. Study should consider access road to Hayden Cabin.
7. Geo-morphologist or wetland biologist needed to weigh in on our improvements to the Stream Corridor, so recommendations are not piecemeal and are well-informed.
8. The continuity of the Stream Corridor should be considered as much as possible, including trail, habitat, etc.
9. Residents for Snowcreek 1, 2 and 3 should be consulted regarding improvements to the trail north of Mammoth Creek in Subarea 1.
10. Include a 35' height design on The Sherwin property among the alternatives.
11. More passive and natural uses should be considered on the south side of the Creek.

12. Consider a "Pilot Study" for improvements for the Creek, to be undertaken by an expert.
13. Pilot Study must consider the entire Creek as its context, not just the Study Area.
14. The District Plan should be codified so future owners have to make improvements to the Creek that are part of the plan.

#### Summary:

1. No agreement on the height of the Sherwin Project. Some wanted it to conform to existing zoning (35' or 45' with below grade parking) others preferred the height on Alternative 2 as a trade-off for preserving the area south of the Creek as open space.
2. No agreement on the location of the General Store.
3. Agreement on the relocation of the interpretative uses from Subareas 1 and 2 to the Hayden Cabin, Subarea 5.
4. General agreement to an off street trail south of the Creek.
5. General agreement to eliminate the sidewalk on the south side of OMR as part of this district study only.
6. Other than the above, the Focus Group was in agreement with the Hybrid Alternative.

## **Summary of Joint Commission's Comments**

**Generally there was consensus on the Hybrid Alternative with the following exceptions:**

1. No on street sidewalks on the north or south of OMR as they would be a duplication of the Class I off street trail south of Mammoth Creek.
2. No reference to future road connections or cross country ski trails in Snowcreek VIII on the mobility map.
3. Add improvement to access road to Hayden Cabin, such as paving per 1990 Master Plan
4. Add retention and improvement of dirt trails next to creek for fishing access

**Issues that were unresolved or need further work are as follows:**

1. Consult with Snowcreek 1, 2 and 3 HOA to determine interest in replacing dirt trail in Subarea 1 to a 6' boardwalk
2. Consult with a qualified scientist and / or engineer to determine a menu of improvements to Mammoth Creek corridor that address habitat restoration, water quality, flood control, erosion, water velocity reduction, etc.
3. Relocation of the General Store in Subarea 1.
4. Addition of more cultural structures south of the creek in Subarea 5.
5. Height of The Sherwin project.

## D. Meeting Minutes #3

## **E. Meeting Minutes #4**

## F. Recommended Native Plant List – Mammoth Creek OSSC Zone

### Upland & Meadow Zone

*Botanical Name*                           *Common Name*

#### Tree

- Pinus contorta murrayana*                   Lodgepole Pine  
*Pinus jeffreyi*                                  Jeffery Pine

#### Shrub

- Arctostaphylos patulaa*                   Greenleaf Manzanita  
*Ribes cereum*                                  Wax Currant  
*Symporicarpos albus*                        Common snowberry

#### Perennial

- Achnatherum thurberianum*               Thurber's needlegrass  
*Balsamorhiza sagittata*                   Balsamroot  
*Bromus marginatus*                        Mountain Brome  
*Carex spp.*                                     Sedge  
*Deschampsia cespitosa*                   Tufted Hairgrass  
*Eriogonum umbellatum*                   Sulfur Flower Buckwheat  
*Eriophyllum lanatum*                      Wooly Sunflower  
*Hordeum brachyantherum*               Meadow Barley  
*Iris missouriensis*                       Rocky Mtn. Iris  
*Juncus balticus*                             Baltic Rush  
*Leymus triticoides*                       Creeping Wild Rye  
*Lupinus argenteus*                       Silver Lupine  
*Phlox speciosa*                             Showy Phlox  
*Poa spp.*                                     Bluegrass  
*Wyethia mollis*                              Wooly Mule's Ear

### Riparian Zone

*Botanical Name*                           *Common Name*

#### Tree

- Alnus tenuifolia*                       Mountain Alder  
*Betula occidentalis*                   Western Water Birch  
*Populus tremuloides*                   Quaking Aspen  
*Salix spp.*                               Willow

#### Shrub

- Artemisia cana*                        Silver Sagebrush

#### Perennial

- Carex spp.*                               Sedge  
*Glyceria grandis*                       American mannagrass  
*Juncus balticus*                           Baltic Rush

### Screening Zone (as needed)

*Botanical Name*                           *Common Name*

#### Tree

- Cercocarpus ledifolius*               Mountain Mahogany  
*Populus tremuloides*                   Quaking Aspen  
*Prunus virginiana demissa*           Western Chokecherry

#### Shrub

- Artemesia tridentata vaseyana*       Big Sagebrush

## G. References

### Map References

1. Town of Mammoth Lakes GIS
2. Town's Aerial Photograph, date?
3. Snowcreek VIII Master Plan, 2007
4. The Sherwin Hotel Site Plan, first published in Draft EIR (January 11, 2008)
5. The Sherwin Condominiums Site Plan, first published in Draft EIR (January 11, 2008)
6. 1990 Park and Recreation Master Plan
7. Town's 2007 General Plan
8. Town's 2006 Zoning Map
9. County Assessor Parcel Data
10. County Subdivision Map Data, Snowcreek and Mammoth Condominiums Public Access and Drainage Easements

## H. Acknowledgments

### Town of Mammoth Lakes

#### Town Council

Wendy Sugimura, Mayor  
Skip Harvey, Councilmember  
Jo Bacon, Councilmember  
John Eastman, Councilmember  
Neil Mccarroll, Mayor Pro Tem

#### Planning Commission Roster 2007-2008

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Tony Barrett  
Rhonda Duggan  
Roy Saari (Chair)  
Elizabeth Tenney (Vice Chair)

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Roy Saari  
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#### Mobility Commission

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Bill Cockroft  
Pam Hennarty  
Sandy Hogan (Chair)  
Marshall Minobe  
Terry Smutney  
Eric Wasserman (Vice Chair)

#### Public Arts Commission

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Michael Bornfeld  
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### Tourism and Recreation Commission

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