



Planning Proposal - FAQs

What is the “Planning Proposal”? The Planning Proposal is a set of documents created and submitted by MLTPA in an effort to initiate a comprehensive trails and public access master and concept planning effort for Mammoth Lakes and the immediate Eastern Sierra region. It includes a description of tasks, parties, timelines, deliverables, and associated costs.

Where are the trails going to be? The geographic scope of the Planning Proposal extends from the very center of the Town of Mammoth Lakes to the Planning Area boundary as described in the 1987 General Plan. This is an area of about 125 square miles, and includes all land within the Urban Growth Boundary and the Town Boundary, as well as a portion of Inyo National Forest over which the TOML has no formal jurisdiction. The Planning Proposal seeks to evaluate and incorporate existing trails, staging areas, trailheads, recreation areas, and the like—including the paved multi-use Mammoth Lakes Trail System here in town—with well-thought-out concepts for connections and new amenities.

Why does anything have to be planned at all? If no master plan exists for the Planning Area, the opportunity to build and enjoy a comprehensive, fully linked system of trails and public access is not guaranteed. A master plan will ensure that no matter who owns or manages the lands that surround us, the public will be able to not only access our public lands with no complications, but that these lands will be accessible in a way that is efficient and enjoyable.

Why do we have to do it now? What’s the rush? According to a recent memorandum from Town Manager Robert F. Clark, the TOML has processed a total of 11 Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs)—a necessary procedure in the process of offering approval for any major development project—in the last 23 years. Today, the TOML is potentially tasked with processing that same number of EIRs *in the next 12 months*. If a master planning effort is not in process during this approval period, there is no guarantee that existing points of public access to and from Inyo National Forest through the Urban Growth Boundary will be protected or ensured...meaning that the trail you take to get out there today might be lost to private ownership tomorrow.

What effect will this have on development here in Mammoth? If initiated, the planning process will have some very positive and beneficial effects on the development community: Heightened demand for “trails adjacent” housing will immediately increase the value of proposed properties; participation in this effort will demonstrate commitment to the long-term health of this community; and the development community can become additional advocates for the recreation and

mobility needs and desires of its residents through wise planning. Development will certainly continue, but with an eye toward the well-being and sustainability of Mammoth Lakes community.

Who or what is MLTPA? MLTPA—Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access—is a nonprofit organization that was founded by John Wentworth and Kim Stravers in 2006 to advocate for a comprehensive system of trails and public access in the community of Mammoth Lakes. The group was formed after a successful campaign in 2005, led by Wentworth, to protect backcountry skier and snowboarder egress from the Sherwins range through Ranch Road. MLTPA was awarded a contract from the TOML in August 2006 to conduct a thorough inventory of all points of public access within the TOML Planning Area, which would serve as a planning resource for the Town; the project was accepted by Town Council at their March 21, 2007, meeting.

How is this going to benefit me? A formal planning process benefits you, the individual, by wholly engaging you in the development of a trails and public access master plan for Mammoth Lakes. Extensive community outreach will be conducted to ensure that the plan that is the end product of this planning process accurately and comprehensively reflects the recreational needs and desires of this community. You'll have the chance to provide input as well as feedback on everything from the routes you travel by foot or bike to work, to the trailhead from which you stage your backpacking trip into the wilderness. No matter which activities you enjoy on our public lands—whether you're walking your dog or heading out for a backcountry ski tour—your opinions are not only relevant, but critical.

Once the planning process is complete, the master and concept plan has been adopted by relevant jurisdictional agencies, and implementation has begun, you, as a resident, second homeowner, or visitor, will be able to enjoy a well-planned, efficient, well-signed, and fun trails and public access system, no matter what your skill level or activity of choice, that *you* helped to design. You can rest assured that access from inside the Town of Mammoth Lakes' Urban Growth Boundary to our surrounding public lands will be guaranteed, safe, and hassle-free.

How is this going to benefit the community of Mammoth Lakes? The benefits of a comprehensive, master-planned system of trails and public access to the Mammoth Lakes community are threefold: economic, recreational, and social. A trails system that is efficient, integrative, easy to use and navigate, and, above all, fun will serve the outdoor recreation needs of both residents and visitors, increasing Mammoth's draw as a year-round destination resort. Increased tourism will not only supplement the bottom line of the town's business sector in the winter and summer, but will also help to fill in the economic gaps created by the current "shoulder seasons," as activities that can be promoted in those months will be enhanced by the presence of a trail system. For year-round residents, access to Inyo National Forest for

everything from birding to snowmobiling will be guaranteed, protected, and stewarded—eliminating many jurisdictional conflicts and encouraging our community to freely enjoy the abundant beauty and resources of our public lands. With a comprehensive system in place, our community will literally be linked from the South Gateway to MMSA. It's good for our health, economically, physically, and mentally!

Has the planning process already started? Not yet. Once funding has been secured—which is expected to come from a variety of sources within the community—MLTPA will move forward with engaging design consultants to begin the planning process. We hope to begin this summer.

When will we get an actual plan out of this? MLTPA has structured its proposal on a 12-month timeline, though the planning process may extend beyond this window.

When do we get new trails? After the planning process has been completed, and the physical plan for the area has been adopted by the TOML and other jurisdictional agencies as necessary, implementation—i.e., sticking shovels in the dirt—can begin. It will be up to the jurisdictional managers of a particular area to engage contractors and provide funding of this aspect, though MLTPA will certainly look to play a helpful role at this stage.

Is this just for hikers and bikers? Nope! The planning effort is a “big tent” venture that seeks to engage and accommodate the recreation needs of everyone in the community, whether your chosen activity is human-powered or runs on gas. MLTPA has identified more than 40 recreation amenities in our area, and any design consultants engaged to draw up a plan will be expected to consider each of those groups’ wants and needs when sketching out their ideas.

Who’s going to do all the work? MLTPA would act as the contracting entity in this process, which means that the TOML and other funding partners would contract with us to manage the project. MLTPA will handle the administration and supervision of its selected design subcontractors, each of whom will implement a detailed project task list, and keep an eye on the overall process. MLTPA will also handle the majority of the public outreach efforts, both online, though the mail, and right here in town.

How much is it going to cost? At present, the estimated total cost for the production of a Trails and Public Access Master and Conceptual Plan is \$485,000.

Who’s going to pay for it? MLTPA anticipates a variety of funding partners, to include the TOML, MMSA, grant funding, and private donations, both from businesses and individuals, from the greater Mammoth Lakes community.

How can I get more information? Log on to MLTPA's website, www.mltpa.org, for timely reports on the status and progress of the Planning Proposal.

What can I do to participate? It would mean a lot to us if you'd download and sign our Letter of Support, available on the MLTPA website, www.mltpa.org. You can either drop it at our offices (42 Davison #2, Mammoth Lakes), or send it to: MLTPA, PO Box 100 PMB #432, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. It would also be fantastic if you could attend the mid-year budget review hearing scheduled for May 16th in Suite Z, when our proposal will go before Council for proposed support and funding, to show our community leaders that you care.

If you'd like to pitch in on a volunteer basis once the planning process begins, send an e-mail to Executive Director Kim Stravers at kimstravers@mltpa.org, or call her at (760) 934-3154. She'll add your name to the list and send you more information once we've established exactly which tasks we're going to need a hand with.

Who is the MLTPA contact for the Planning Proposal? Kim Stravers is the executive director of MLTPA and can be reached at (760) 934-3154 or kimstravers@mltpa.org. John Wentworth is the president of the MLTPA Foundation Board of Directors and can be reached at (760) 934-3154 or johnwentworth@mltpa.org. We look forward to hearing from you!