



Town of Mammoth Lakes

Planning & Economic Development Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: February 9, 2022

AGENDA TITLE: Public hearing and consideration of Design Review 21-005 and Use Permit 21-005 for the interim “Phase One” redevelopment of the Sierra Nevada Resort site located at 164, 202 and 248 Old Mammoth Road. An Addendum to the 2008 Clearwater Specific Plan EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15164 (*Addendum to an EIR or Negative Declaration*).¹

Applicant/ Property Owner: WH SN Mammoth, L.L.C.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:

Community & Economic Development

Sandra Moberly, Community and Economic Development Director

Gina Montecallo, Assistant Planner

OBJECTIVE:

1. Hear Staff and Applicant presentations
2. Hold Public Hearing
3. Planning & Economic Development Commission (PEDC) discussion
4. PEDC action to either:
 - a. Adopt the attached Planning and Economic Development Commission Resolution (the Resolution), making the required Design Review, Use Permit, and CEQA findings, and approving Design Review Application #DR 21-005, Use Permit #UP 21-005 with conditions as recommended by staff;
 - b. Adopt the Resolution with modifications; or
 - c. Deny the Resolution

SUMMARY:

Proposal: The proposed project would consist of interior and exterior improvements to the existing 149-unit hotel and Rafters restaurant, the construction of 30 new resort cabin units, an expanded event/meeting space, and added amenities for both guests and the community. The project also proposes 7 affordable housing units as addressed in the Affordable Housing Mitigation Plan, a Parking Management Plan to allow for a 15% reduction in required parking (186 parking spaces proposed), and the incorporation of a valet program, and a range of regularly scheduled events managed by the Events Management Plan.

The project also includes the revocation of the previous Old Mammoth Place entitlement (VTTM 16-001, UPA 16-001, DR 16-004), which is required to move forward with the current entitlement. This revocation does not affect the approved CSP and the scale of

¹ The public hearing notice for this project included consideration of Lot Line Adjustment 21-006 to merge three lots, 64, 202, and 248 Old Mammoth Road. This component of the project can be processed administratively and, due to applicant timing constraints, staff will process Lot Line Adjustment 21-006 separately from Design Review 21-005 and Use Permit 21-005.

development permitted under the CSP and a future development project could be proposed that is similar in size and scale as the approved Old Mammoth Place project.

Project Name: Sierra Nevada Resort Redevelopment
Location: 164, 202 and 248 Old Mammoth Road
Size of Property: 6.09 acres
Zoning: Clearwater Specific Plan
General Plan: Clearwater Specific Plan

KEY ISSUES:

1. Does the proposed project meet the Design Review criteria and required findings pursuant to MC Sections 17.88.050 and 17.88.060, respectively?
2. Does the proposed project meet the Use Permit required findings pursuant to MC Sections 17.68.050?
3. Can a parking reduction be approved pursuant to Municipal Code Section 17.44.040?

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The project site is currently the location of the Sierra Nevada Resort, a roughly 6.09-acre complex that includes a 149 unit, 2-story hotel, Rafters Restaurant and Jimmy's Taverna buildings that total in 15,600 square feet of restaurant space, a miniature golf course and pool. The resort was originally built in 1967 and was renovated in 2014. There are currently 230 parking spaces serving the site, distributed along Old Mammoth Road, Sierra Nevada Road, Laurel Mountain Road and along the north end of the property.

The Clearwater Specific Plan (CSP) was adopted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes on January 21, 2009, for the development of a new, pedestrian oriented, mixed-use, resort destination development located within the North Old Mammoth Road District of the Town.

In March 2010, in compliance with CSP, the Planning and Economic Development Commission approved a vesting tentative tract map, conditional use permit, and design review for a mixed-use project called "Old Mammoth Place." The Old Mammoth Place entitlements include up to 340 residential units with up to 488 lodging rooms, eight on-site workforce housing units, multiple outdoor public events plazas, approximately 20,000 square feet of commercial/retail space, approximately 17,000 square feet of restaurant space, 9,500 square feet of conference space, a 4,500 square-foot spa and wellness center, an ice rink, a pool, and an underground parking garage covering the entire site (the original CSP approval documents can be found at the following link: <https://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/142/Clearwater-Specific-Plan>). Approval of the project entitlements included approval of a Final EIR (SCH# 2006062154).

Throughout the first six years after the approval of Old Mammoth Place, there proved to be no financing available to construct the project and no market for the sale of condominium hotel rooms. In August 2016, in order to improve the economic viability and marketability of the project, the owner obtained approval of amendments to the CSP and the Old Mammoth Place entitlements, which included a 10-foot increase in building height, an increase in net residential square footage, and the elimination of an on-site workforce housing requirement. At this time, a CEQA addendum to the Clearwater Specific Plan (Old Mammoth Place CUP Addendum (SCH# 2006062154) was prepared to confirm that the proposed modifications were consistent with what was analyzed as part of the Specific Plan Final EIR. This Addendum was approved in 2016.

Since that time, development of the project site as anticipated in the CSP and the 2016 Old Mammoth Place CSP Amendment has not occurred. In December 2021, the Applicant requested a new amendment to the CSP to allow for an interim development to be constructed at the project site while preserving the existing Specific Plan allowances for the potential future development per the approved 2016 Old Mammoth Place CUP Amendment.

On December 1, 2021 the Town Council approved District Zoning Amendment 21-001 which revised the Clearwater Specific Plan (CSP) to establish development standards for an Amended Phase One Project. The proposed interim development standards accommodate a less intensive expansion and upgrade of the hotel, restaurant, and public spaces than is envisioned by the CSP/ Old Mammoth Place entitlements while still allowing for the future development of the Old Mammoth Place project consistent with The CSP's long-term vision and goals.

Given the scope of the proposed changes to the existing buildings as well as the introduction of resort cabin units, Design Review and Use Permit are required per Amended Phase One of the Clearwater Specific Plan. The purpose of Design Review is to implement the Clearwater Specific Plan and General Plan policies related to community design and character, to promote excellence in site planning and design to complement the natural environment and enhance the image of the town as a mountain resort community, and to ensure that the architectural design of structures and their materials and colors are appropriate to the function of the project and visually harmonious with surrounding development. The purpose of the Use Permit is to review the location, design, configuration, and potential impacts of the proposed use, to evaluate the compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding uses and the suitability of the use to the site.

Projects which are deemed significant by the Community and Economic Development Department require review by the ADP prior to review and a decision by the Planning and Economic Development Commission (PEDC). The role of the ADP is to provide impartial professional feedback to Town staff and the PEDC on site planning and building design based on the same guidance that staff uses in their analysis. Those recommendations are then typically used to make changes to the project that improve conformity with the guiding documents, which include the Town's General Plan, Zoning Code, and Design Guidelines.

A Major Design Review Application for the project was submitted on November 17, 2021, and staff issued initial review comments on December 13, 2021. Following discussions with the applicant, the plan set was re-submitted on January 6, 2022, and was brought before the ADP on January 9, 2022. Overall, the ADP was in support of the proposed project but provided a number of comments for how the project could be modified to better meet the intent of the Town Design Guidelines (See **Attachment 4** for 1/9/22 ADP Meeting Minutes and Applicant Responses). The current project plans have been revised to address the ADP comments from the January meeting.

Project Proposal:

The goal of the project is to redevelop the Sierra Nevada Resort in accordance with the Phase I description of the Clearwater Specific Plan. The Project's scope would entail the demolition of Jimmy's Taverna and Frosty's Miniature Golf Course, the renovation of the current 149-unit hotel with both interior and exterior improvements, the addition of new resort cabins, the enhancement of the Old Mammoth Road frontage and improvements to the site amenities. In addition, an Affordable Housing Mitigation Plan would incorporate seven employee housing units within the renovated hotel.

The renovation of the current hotel would include a refined entry sequence which would have signature signage and an entry portal and porte cochère designed with stone, wood, and metal. The lobby would be repurposed with a wine/coffee bar and a location for local or guest events that can open to an extended patio and garden that is outward facing to Old Mammoth Road.

The site would include the addition of 30 resort cabin units for a revised total of 179 hotel rooms. The outward facing resort cabin units, described as "villas" in this report, would be two-story four-plex's and would be similar in size to the adjacent condominium units across Sierra Nevada Road, while the interior cabin units would be one-story single units. The cabins would be modular, prefabricated structures that would have architectural characteristics such as roof lines, window styles and materials that blend with both the architecture of the current resort and the neighboring properties. The cabin roofs would reflect simple, traditional gable roof lines while the villas would provide character and continuity with the existing hotel roof lines. Deep eaves would be designed

into both the cabins and the villas. Exposed rafter tails would be incorporated into the architecture of the villas. The cabins and villas face inwards towards a communal lounging lawn and fire pits.

Improvements to site amenities would include a campus plan with lounging lawns, fire pits, new pool and hot tubs, a community focused food garden and an extended deck on Old Mammoth Road. The Project would activate the Old Mammoth Road frontage by designing a food garden, a food truck area, lawn games, and outdoor lounging with café tables and picnic tables. These spaces would be supported by the Rafters restaurant and the outdoor dining area. Pedestrian scale lighting along with overhead string lights would illuminate this area during the evening to activate and enhance this area during the afternoon and into the evening hours. A proposed Event Management Plan (**Attachment 6**) describes the schedule and range of events that would take place in these spaces. Additional screening with native trees, shrubs, and ground cover would be incorporated along the road to enhance this area of the property and also to screen vehicular traffic from within the site. Additional site improvements involve the consolidation of vehicular access points, a new sidewalk along Laurel Mountain Road and new parking lot landscaping. Site ingress and egress would be provided via one driveway on Old Mammoth Road, one driveway on Sierra Nevada Road, and two driveways on Laurel Mountain Road. The existing service driveway to Rafters will remain but is used for deliveries only and not for public access to the site.

The Project proposes a 186-space surface parking lot to serve the hotel, restaurant, and related uses, which would result in a 34-space deficit per the Clearwater Specific Plan Amended Phase One parking standards. The Applicant has responded to the parking deficit by providing a Shared Parking Analysis which concludes that a surplus of 1 parking space exists during Saturday peak times, which is discussed in more detail below.

See Figure 1 for the overall site plan provided by the applicant which shows the development and improvements as part of the Amended Phase One of the CSP.



Figure 1: Amended Phase One Site Plan



Figure 2: Hotel Lobby



Figure 3: Rafters Building

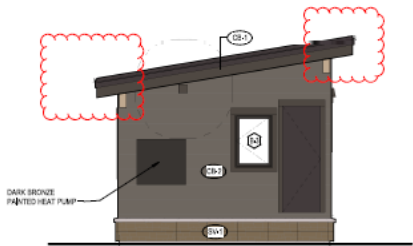


Figure 4: Cabin Front Elevation

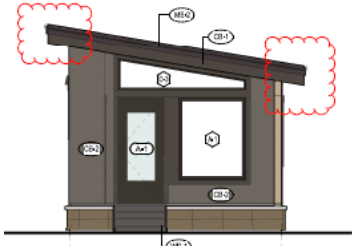


Figure 5: Cabin Rear Elevation

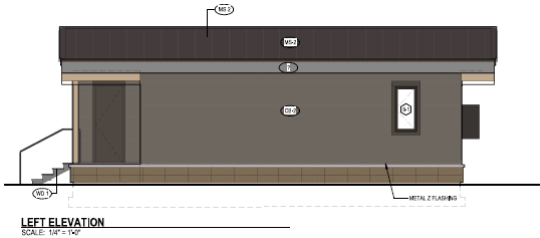


Figure 6: Cabin Left Elevation

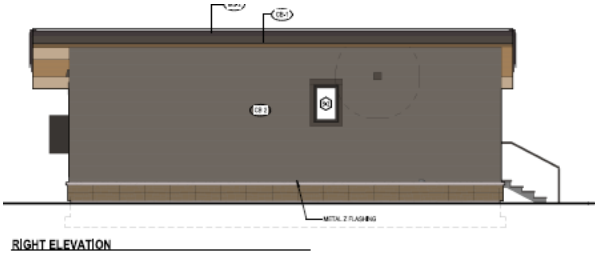


Figure 7: Cabin Right Elevation



Figure 8: Villa Front Elevation

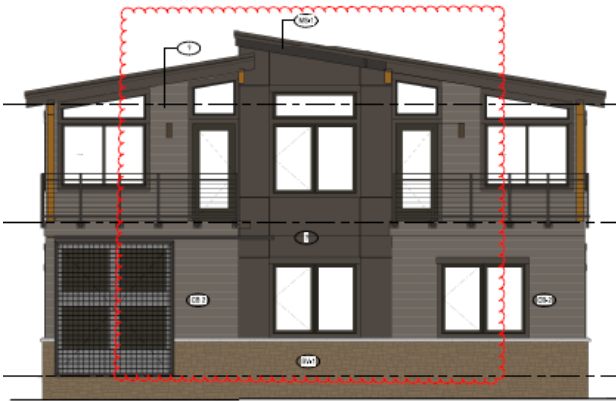


Figure 9: Villas Rear Elevation



Figure 10: Villas Left Side Elevation

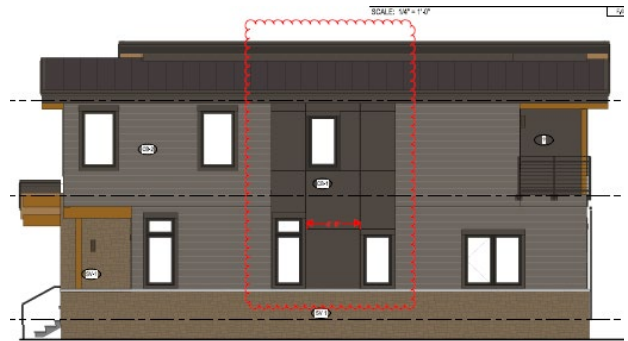


Figure 11: Villas Right Side Elevation

Existing Site and Surrounding Land Uses

The 6.09-acre project site is located in the North Old Mammoth Road district and is bounded by Old Mammoth Road to the east, Laurel Mountain Road to the west, and Sierra Nevada Road to the south, and condominium and commercial buildings to the north. There are currently vehicular access points on all sides of the property. Existing buildings on the property include the Sierra Nevada Lodge, Rafters restaurant, and Red Lantern/Jimmy's restaurants. A large surface parking area and a miniature golf course also exist on site, with minimal landscaping except for a few Jeffery Pine trees. Although the site appears generally flat, there is a grade change of approximately 19 feet from the northwest to the northeast corner. Please see **Figure 2** below for an aerial view of the existing site.



Figure 12: Aerial Image of Existing Site and Surrounding Area

The project is zoned Clearwater Specific Plan (CSP) and the surrounding land uses include both commercial and residential uses. **Table 2** describes the surrounding land uses and zoning.

Table 2: Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning

Location	Zoning*	Land Use	Special Considerations
North	D; OMR	Mammoth Mall (commercial); Krystal Villa East (residential condos)	Because the site is surrounded by primarily residential uses, noise, traffic safety, visual impacts and operating characteristics are all factors that should be considered. The proposed use permit and conditions of approval ensure each of these issues is addressed.
South	RMF-2	Sierra Park Villas (residential condos)	
East	OMR	Sierra Manor (residential condos)	
West	OMR	Commercial, apartments, L'Abri (residential condos)	

*D = Downtown; OMR = Old Mammoth Road; RMF-2 = Residential Multi-Family 2

Site Zoning

The site is subject to the Clearwater Specific Plan as amended in 2016 and 2021. The CSP as amended allows up to 340 residential units with up to 488 lodging rooms, workforce housing that is consistent with the Town's Housing Ordinance, multiple outdoor public events plazas, approximately 20,000 square feet of commercial/retail space, approximately 17,000 square feet of restaurant space, 9,500 square feet of conference space, a 4,500 square-foot spa and wellness center, an ice rink, a pool, and an underground parking garage covering the entire site. The Amended Phase One of the CSP which was approved in December 2021 modified the zoning to accommodate interim development while preserving the original zoning allowances for future redevelopment. The Amended Phase One of the CSP development standards allow for the addition of 30 resort cabin units and site improvements as proposed in this Project.

II. ANALYSIS OF KEY ISSUES

The original CSP approval documents and amendments can be found at the following link: <https://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/141/Old-Mammoth-Place-Information>. Approval of the project entitlements included approval of a Final EIR (SCH# 2006062154).

General Plan Consistency:

As stated in MC Section 17.04.040.B, the *"Zoning Code is the primary tool used by the Town of Mammoth Lakes to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of the Mammoth Lakes General Plan. The Mammoth Lakes Town Council intends that this Zoning Code be consistent with the Mammoth Lakes General Plan, and that any land use, or development approved in compliance with this Zoning Code will also be consistent with the Mammoth Lakes General Plan."* The site is located within the Clearwater Specific Plan land use designation in the 2007 General Plan. The intent of the CSP designation is to provide "for a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use district for residents and visitors within the North Old Mammoth Road area. Permitted uses include hotel, condominium-hotel, workforce housing, street front retail along Old Mammoth Road, and a large public plaza intended for use as an event venue. The base density is forty (40) hotel rooms per acre with the potential for up to eighty (80) hotel rooms per acre. Pursuant to the Clearwater Specific Plan, significant community benefits are required to be provided. Workforce housing and commercial uses are exempt from density calculations." Please see **Key Issue #1 and #2** below for staff's analysis of the project's consistency with the General Plan. Specific General Plan Vision Statements with which the proposed project is consistent are described in **Table 2**:

Table 2: General Plan Vision Statement Conformance

General Plan Vision Statement	Explanation of Project Conformance
<i>“being a great place to live and work”</i>	The project would provide a number of new jobs within the community and would completely renovate the existing hotel and Rafters restaurant provide additional hotel offerings through the construction of 30 new resort cabin units as well as expanded event/meeting space and added amenities for both guests and members of the community. The proposed site and building improvements would benefit both residents and visitors alike by activating the streetscape, improving safety, and enhancing regional draw.
<i>“Being a premier year-round resort community based on diverse outdoor recreation, multiday events and an ambiance that attracts visitors”</i>	The proposed project would result in a newly renovated hotel and 30 new resort cabin units, which will help to attract visitors and generate year-round resort activities. Additionally, the proposed events/outdoor space will provide an enhanced ambiance for guests and members of the community and will provide an location for a range of special events.
<i>“Protecting the surrounding natural environment and supporting our small town atmosphere by limiting the urbanized area.”</i>	The project is an in-fill renovation project within the urban growth boundary and the density is consistent with that allowed by the General Plan and Municipal Code.

The project is consistent with the following General Plan goals, policies, and actions as described in **Table 3**:

Table 3: General Plan Conformance with Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal, Policy, or Action	Explanation of Project Conformance with Goal, Policy, or Action
E.1. Be a premier destination community in order to achieve a sustainable year-round economy.	The new modern lodging options designed to accommodate a range of visitor groups within walking distance of many local attractions will further this goal.
E.3.C. Policy: Support development of major public and private facilities that contribute to destination resort visitation in Mammoth Lakes.	The proposed renovation/new cabin units will add new high quality lodging options, which will contribute to destination resort visitation.
C.2. Ensure safe and attractive public spaces, including sidewalks, trails, parks and streets.	The proposed project includes several improvements to the existing streetscape that will help to improve pedestrian safety and create attractive public spaces.
C.2.T: Use natural, high quality building materials to reflect Mammoth Lakes’ character and mountain setting.	The project incorporates high quality building materials that create an aesthetic that is both natural and modern. The natural tones and textures are consistent with the Town’s character and mountain setting.

C.2.F: Improve visual appearance as well as pedestrian access and activity by requiring infill development patterns.	The project is an infill project that improves the visual appearance of the building and site while enhancing pedestrian access and safety.
C.3.D: Development shall provide pedestrian oriented facilities, outdoor seating, plazas, weather protection, transit waiting areas and other streetscape improvements.	The proposed project adds a new food garden with outdoor seating, a location for food trucks, and a performance stage with seating and bicycle amenities.

Consistency with the Amended Phase One of the Clearwater Specific Plan

Table 1: Development Standards Table

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	Required	Provided	Complies?
Total Project Site Size:	6.09 acres	6.09 acres	Yes
Number of existing hotel rooms:	149 rooms	149 rooms	Yes
Number of additional resort cabin rooms:	30 rooms	30 rooms	Yes
Maximum Building Height – Cabins:	35 feet	29'3"	Yes
Maximum Restaurant square feet:	10,000 square feet	10,000	Yes
Maximum Event space square feet:	2,000 square feet	2,000	Yes
Minimum Building Separation	5 feet	10	Yes
Minimum Setbacks - Old Mammoth Road Frontage	5 feet	20+ feet	Yes
Minimum Setbacks – Sierra Nevada	10 feet	70+ feet	Yes
Minimum Setbacks – Laurel Mountain	3 feet	24+ feet	Yes
Maximum Lot Coverage	70%	68%	Yes
Total parking spaces:	Parking shall meet the requirements set forth in the 2016 Clearwater Specific Plan unless a Parking Reduction is approved pursuant to MC Section 17.44.040 220 spaces	186	No – Parking reduction requested See Key Issue #3, below

Minimum Snow Storage	53,300 square feet	34,400	No – Condition of Approval 48 requires a snow removal/snow storage plan including snow hauling.
Minimum Open Space/ Landscaped Area	73,000 square feet	92,347	Yes

Affordable Housing Mitigation Plan

The applicant is proposing to mitigate their affordable housing requirements through the implementation of an Alternate Housing Mitigation Plan (AHMP) in accordance with MC Chapter 17.136 (**Attachment 5**). The AHMP is committing the hotel operator to providing on-site workforce housing for seven hotel employees. The on-site units will be constructed within existing areas of the hotel and will consist of one 1-bedroom unit, one 2-bedroom unit, and one 4-bedroom unit. Eligibility for the units will be limited to employees of the hotel only who earn up to 80% of the area median income (AMI). Rent, inclusive of utilities, for the units will be determined based on the employees hourly rate and will be calculated out to not exceed 30% of their monthly income. To ensure the continued affordability of the units, a Rent Regulatory Agreement will be required that establishes the terms of the affordable rental units. The agreement is required to remain in place for 55 years unless the site is completely redeveloped or the hotel operator abandons their use permit.

The Town's Housing Ordinance imposes a housing mitigation fee that is applicable to all new development and the various housing mitigation options are all related to that fee. The applicant is proposing to add 30 hotel rooms and based on the current fee of \$4,280/hotel room, their housing mitigation fee would be \$128,400. Regardless of which mitigation option the applicant chooses, the total mitigation cost is not required to exceed the amount of the fee. The pro-forma provided by the applicant indicates that the renovation cost to convert the units from hotel rooms/common areas into seven apartments is \$133,980. Therefore, the applicant is providing housing mitigation at a similar value as would be otherwise required.

However, pursuant to the amended phase 1 of the CSP, the applicant is only required to provide on-site workforce housing for five hotel employees, but is committing to providing housing for seven employees, and the Town acknowledges that the cost to otherwise build the workforce housing units would be significantly higher than the conversion cost. As such, the applicant has asked for a credit for housing the additional two employees in accordance with MC §17.136.030 which states "*credit for the provision of housing mitigation above that required by Chapter 17.136 shall be determined by the director.*" The Housing Ordinance does not provide clear direction for determining the value of units in this scenario; however, the Town Council established in 2019 an Affordable Housing Credit Valuation policy (Resolution 19-57) for determining the value of existing housing credits that projects received from building affordable housing. Although the proposed employee housing will be constructed simultaneously with the new hotel rooms, and are not existing, it is logical to utilize the housing credit policy to establish the value of the proposed employee housing and the value of any excess credits. Using this approach, the value of the credits is the difference between what the housing mitigation fee would be in accordance with the adopted Housing Mitigation Fee Schedule (Resolution 21-77) and the value of the proposed employee housing based on the number of bedrooms pursuant to the housing credit policy. If the mitigation fee is less, then the developer would retain the additional credits as Employee Housing Unit (EHU) credits and if the mitigation fee is more, then the developer would be required to pay the difference.²

- Affordable Housing Credit Valuation Policy (Resolution 19-57): 1 EHU = \$24,908

² An Employee Housing Unit (EHU) is defined as a bedroom, meaning they are proposing seven EHUs.

- TOTAL VALUE OF THE UNITS: $\$24,908 \times 7 = \$174,353$
- Housing Mitigation Fee: $\$4,280 \times 30 = \$128,400$
- **Value of the Credit: $\$128,400 - \$174,353 = \$45,953$**
 - **NUMBER OF EHU CREDITS: $\$45,953 / \$24,908 = 1.84$ EHUs**

Pursuant to the housing credit policy, the Town will document the use of credits through a signed agreement between the owner of the property and the Town that states what the value of the credits were at the time of use and the number of remaining credits.

Due to the potential for redevelopment of the property at any point between now and the end of the 55 year term of the rent regulatory agreement and the inability of the Town to prevent the use from being converted to another use entirely, staff is recommending that the credits not be eligible for transfer to any other property. The owner of the property could use the value of the credits in the future if they add additional hotel rooms to the project in a manner similar to the current project. Staff recommends that the Planning and Economic Development Commission add the following language to section X of the AHMP:

The housing credits shall remain with the Sierra Nevada Resort project site and shall only be used to satisfy the housing mitigation requirements for future expansions of the subject Sierra Nevada Resort property. The credits shall not be eligible for transfer to any other property.

Events Management Plan

The project is designed with a “campus feel” and includes lounging lawns, fire pits, new pool and hot tubs, a community focused food garden and an extended deck on Old Mammoth Road. The food garden, a food truck area, lawn games, and outdoor lounging with café tables and picnic tables along Old Mammoth Road is intended to activate pedestrian frontage and draw visitors to the property. An Events Management Plan (**Attachment 6**) describes the schedule and range of events that would take place in these spaces. The resolution includes Condition of Approval # 32 which requires a final Events Management Plan to be recorded against the property and include that the property will comply with the Town’s Noise Ordinance, parking requirements, and notification of neighbors within 300 feet of the property. The notification is intended to provide a general description of events and contact information of management who can be reached in the event of a noise complaint.

Consistency with Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines

Pursuant to Section 17.88.030 of the Municipal Code, Design Guidelines adopted by the Town Council provide recommendations to be used in the design review process. They are intended to promote high-quality and thoughtful site and building design; visually interesting, appropriate, well-crafted and maintained buildings and landscaping; the use of durable high-quality, and natural materials that reflect Mammoth Lakes' character and mountain setting; and attention to the design and execution of building details and amenities in both public and private projects. The Design Review process is intended to implement the recommendations of the Town Design Guidelines, and the design review criteria are intended to encompass the primary design objectives included therein. In this case, staff finds that the Design Review criteria sufficiently address those elements of the Town Design Guidelines that are applicable to this project, and that staff’s analysis of the design review criteria above also effectively describes the project’s consistency with the Town Design Guidelines.

KEY ISSUE #1: Does the proposed project meet the Design Review criteria pursuant to Municipal Code (MC) Section 17.88.050 and the Required Findings set forth in MC Section 17.88.060?

Staff finds that the project will improve the design and functionality of the building and site as a part of the project and has met the overall intent of the Design Review criteria. Below is staff’s analysis of project’s consistency with the Design Review criteria:

Design Review Criteria:

To obtain design review approval, projects must satisfy these criteria to the extent they apply:

- A. The site design and building design elements including the architectural style, size, design quality, use of building materials, and similar elements, combine together in an attractive and visually cohesive manner that is compatible with and complements the desired architectural and/or aesthetic character of the area and a mountain resort community, encourages increased pedestrian activity, and promotes compatibility among neighboring land uses.**

In terms of building design, the project would retain the existing hotel and Rafters restaurant while updating some of the façade materials and colors to match the façade materials and colors of the proposed modular four-plex villas and single unit cabins. The cabins and villas have architectural characteristics such as roof lines, window styles and materials that blend with both the architecture of the current resort and the neighboring properties. The project would incorporate a new entry portal, port cochere, and newly painted siding to give the existing buildings an updated look to match the modular units.

The overall exterior materials palette for the site would be consolidated to three primary exterior material types consisting of lap siding, stone veneer, and wood siding and associated matching paint colors consisting of different shades of brown, grey and tan. Material consistency at both new and existing buildings is further reinforced with the use of matching lap siding exposure, use of stone at building entry locations, and matching accent paints at deck posts, entry beams, and other exposed structural elements. Overall, the proposed building materials create an aesthetic, with both modern and traditional elements, that is appropriate for a mid-range, family-friendly hotel while remaining consistent with the mountain character of Mammoth Lakes.

The cabin roofs reflect simple, traditional gable roof lines with the villas providing character and continuity with the existing hotel roof lines. Deep eaves are designed into both the cabins and the villas and exposed rafter tails will be incorporated into the architecture of the villas. Balconies and other recesses combined with material changes provide a rich rhythm of the architecture with balcony rails designed to complement the architecture. Decks have been provided to enhance building articulation and maximize view potential, particularly for the villas at the upper level. All street facing buildings have a variety of shapes and forms and materiality to provide interest. The primary building entrance would include a new stone veneer and cedar wood porte-cochere/ awning feature, enhanced lighting, recessed entries, and new landscaping.

In addition to the proposed building improvements, a variety of site improvements are also proposed. Along Old Mammoth Road, the project would provide a new outdoor seating area for the proposed restaurant use, new landscaping, and a new food truck area at the southeast corner of the site that would provide seating and gathering areas. Additional site improvements include reconfiguring the existing site access to improve pedestrian safety by removing two vehicular driveways, extensive landscaping and a new board-formed concrete retaining wall.

Overall, the proposed building and site improvements combine together in an attractive and visually cohesive manner that is compatible with and complements the desired aesthetic character of a mountain resort community, encourages increased pedestrian activity, and improves compatibility with neighboring land uses.

The trash area will match the design palette of the overall project and the final design and alignment of the trash enclosure will be reviewed by Mammoth Disposal as well as the Public Works and Community and Economic Development Departments to ensure that it will comply with Mammoth Disposal operational requirements as well as Municipal Code section 17.36.130.

- B. The design of streetscapes, including street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture, is consistent with the character of commercial districts and nearby residential neighborhoods.**

The proposed streetscape design would add a new outdoor seating area, a variety of new street trees along Old Mammoth Road, a food and beverage garden with seating and bicycle amenities. The proposed streetscape improvements will make the project more compatible with the vision of the surrounding Old Mammoth Road zoning and will help to meet the intent of the Amended Phase One of the Clearwater Specific Plan Development to ensure that frontages “*provide a new and vibrant outdoor venue and park for community activities and events*” and “*animate and activate the Old Mammoth Road streetscape*”.

- C. Parking areas are located, designed and developed to foster and implement the planned mobility system for the area; buffer surrounding land uses; minimize visibility; prevent conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists; minimize stormwater run-off and the heat-island effect; and achieve a safe, efficient, and harmonious development.**

Because the proposed project is maintaining the existing building footprint, there is limited opportunity to significantly modify the existing surface parking lot. However, the proposal includes several improvements to the existing parking area that help the project to better meet the intent of the above criterion. Specifically, the new landscaping proposed along Old Mammoth Road and within the parking lot will help to buffer surrounding land uses and minimize visibility while mitigating stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect. Additionally, closing off two of the three vehicular access points along Old Mammoth Road will help to prevent conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

- D. Down-directed and shielded lighting and lighting fixtures are designed to complement buildings, be of appropriate scale, provide adequate light over walkways and parking areas to create a sense of pedestrian safety, minimize light pollution and trespass, and avoid creating glare.**

The Project would propose higher levels of illumination around building entrances through the use of bollards, wall, and step lighting. The proposed lighting fixtures throughout the pedestrian zones would be subtle, downward lit fixtures that create enough light for safety and navigation, but do not overwhelm. Lighting has been designed in conformance with the Design Guidelines and parking lot lighting is proposed to be pole-mounted and located, where possible, in landscaped areas. Additionally, Condition of Approval #15_ requires all exterior lighting to comply with Chapter 17.36.030 of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, to be verified prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy. All lighting for the project will therefore be consistent with existing Municipal Code lighting requirements.

- E. Landscaping is designed to conserve water resources, promotes a natural aesthetic, and be compatible with and enhance the architectural character and features of the buildings on site, and help relate the building to the surrounding landscape.**

The proposed landscaping is consistent with the recommendations of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines, and will enhance the architectural features of the building. The Project would retain the majority of existing trees while also incorporating the addition of native plant material. In addition, the proposed gathering areas will incorporate a mix of turf, decomposed granite surfacing and natural planting, thereby helping to conserve water resources.

In addition to the above criteria, the Municipal Code requires that a Design Review Application demonstrate consistency with the applicable standards and requirements of the Code, the General Plan and any applicable specific plan or master plan, The Town of Mammoth Lakes Design Guidelines, and any other requirements associated with previous or existing planning or zoning approvals for the site.

KEY ISSUE #2: Can the findings be made for approval of a Use Permit pursuant to MC Section 17.68.050?

Use Permit Findings:

- A. The proposed use is consistent with all applicable sections of the General Plan and Title 17 and is consistent with any applicable specific plan or master plan.**

The 2007 *Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan* land use map designates the entire project site Clearwater Specific Plan (CSP). The CSP land use designation allows hotel, condominium-hotel, workforce housing, street front retail along Old Mammoth Road, and plaza areas for gathering/events. The project includes interior and exterior improvements to the existing hotel and Rafters restaurant, the construction of 30 new resort cabin units, an expanded event/meeting space and added amenities for both guests and the community. All of these uses are consistent with the CSP General Plan land use designation.

The CSP sets forth the land use development standards for this site rather than Title 17 (Zoning Code). The proposed hotel use and associated uses are consistent with the CSP land use designation which allows hotel, retail, restaurant uses as well as amenities to enhance the visitor experience and support long-term visitation. The project will include a pool, hot tubs, outdoor gathering spaces, as well as retail facilities (ski rental) oriented to guests of the project.

- B. The proposed use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health and safety nor materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.**

The proposed use and the conditions under which it would be operated will not be detrimental to the public health or safety nor materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity because the Clearwater Specific Plan EIR (SC# 2006062154) and 2021 Addendum analyzed potential impacts of the proposed use related to aesthetics, air quality, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, traffic, and other issues. The analyses prepared for each potential impact category concluded that the proposed project would not have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, following conformance with the existing regulatory framework and mitigation measures.

- C. The Commission shall make such other findings as deemed necessary to support approval or denial of the proposed use.**

The project will include outdoor activities and events as described in the Events Management Plan (**Attachment 6**). The Conditions of Approval included herein require the use to be operated in compliance with the approved Events Management Plan that addresses mitigation of any potential negative impacts. The use will not generate excessive noise because the outdoor events will be managed and operated per the recommendations developed by the Events Management Plan. The outdoor activities/events will not be detrimental to the public health and safety because they are compatible with other uses allowed in the Old Mammoth Road zoning district and Commercial-2 land use designation. The Old Mammoth Road zoning district promotes a mix and intensity of uses in a pedestrian-scaled environment at a scale and form appropriate to the neighborhood context and adjacent residential uses and forms.

KEY ISSUE #3: Can a parking reduction be approved pursuant to Municipal Code Section 17.44.040?

Municipal Code Section 17.44.040 allows the PEDC to reduce the number of parking spaces required for a project with the approval of a use permit. Section 17.44.040.1 outlines criteria that must be met in order to reduce the number of required parking spaces for a particular project. The applicant has prepared a Parking Analysis that addresses some of the requirements of 17.44.040.1, listed below:

- a. *Use of a valet parking program will result in more efficient use of the existing parking area and provide an increase in the amount of available on-site parking commensurate with the size of the parking reduction being requested without impacting existing circulation or right-of-way;*
- b. *Varying time periods of use will accommodate peak parking demand for each land use for which a reduction is requested based on Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation estimates;*
- c. *Internal or external trip capture by nearby on-site or off-site uses will reduce parking demand;*
- d. *Some or all of the parking needs of the use will be adequately served through on-street parking in the right-of-way or off-street parking on an ongoing basis, in conformance with any existing seasonal restrictions on on-street parking adopted by the Town or the entity owning or maintaining any street on which parking is proposed;*
- e. *Implementation of transportation demand management measures will continue to reduce the need for on-site parking on an ongoing basis (see Section 17.44.050); or*
- f. *The parking needs of all uses will be met through shared use of off-street parking facilities by one or more uses, consistent with the following standards:*
- g. *For off-site shared parking requests, a shared parking agreement shall be provided in a form acceptable to the review authority which identifies the location of the off-site shared parking spaces, guarantees the continued availability of the off-site shared parking spaces, and sets forth the ongoing responsibilities of the parties involved. The parties to the agreement shall include the owners and lessees of the off-site parking spaces and the owners and lessees of the subject site, and a copy of any such agreement shall be provided to the Town. The Town shall not be required to be a party to any such agreement, but each agreement shall grant the Town the right (but not the obligation) to enforce the agreement's terms and shall include a provision requiring that the Town be notified immediately of any termination or default of the agreement. Any termination or default of the agreement between parties shall result in revocation of the parking reduction approval by the Town unless a new alternative parking arrangement is approved by the Director within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the Director.*
- h. *Before approving a parking reduction pursuant to this subsection, the review authority shall evaluate any existing parking arrangements to determine whether additional parking can be accommodated subject to Town standards. If the review authority finds that additional parking can reasonably be provided, the provision of such parking shall be a condition of approval of the requested reduction.*

The Project proposes a 186-space surface parking lot to serve the hotel, restaurant, and related uses, which would result in a 34-space deficit per the Clearwater Specific Plan Amended Phase One parking standards. The Parking Analysis provided by the applicant (Attachment #7) primarily references the differences in time-of-day parking demand for the various uses (hotel and restaurant) on the site. For example, peak parking demand for a restaurant (typically lunch or late evening) does not occur at the same time as peak parking demand for a hotel (overnight). Therefore, parking between the uses could be shared at different times of day. In addition, the analysis references the actual internal hotel-guest capture of Rafters Restaurant (using the 365 days of 2019 as a “typical” data point), which indicates that over the course of a day, between 26% and 79% of Rafters patrons are also guests of the hotel. Therefore, the parking demand can be further shared between the uses. The analysis concludes that, based on an average of utilization rates for a variety of types of restaurants (hotel-restaurant/lounge, family restaurant, and fine/casual dining), the peak parking demand of 185 spaces results in a surplus of 1 parking space on the site.

To further mitigate the impact of the proposed parking reduction, the project would be able to utilize approximately 10 future on-street public parking spaces on Laurel Mountain Road adjacent to the project, that are planned to be constructed in the summer of 2022 as part of the Town’s “Laurel Mountain Road Rehabilitation and Sidewalk” capital project. Consistent with other public parking throughout Town, the spaces would be open

to the public and would not permit parking overnight. The resolution includes Condition of Approval #52, which requires the property owner to enter into an agreement with the Town, taking responsibility for the removal and storage of snow from the sidewalk and the parking spaces adjacent to the project.

In addition, the resolution includes Condition of Approval #30, which requires the Property Owner to provide a Parking Management Plan to the Town for approval. The plan shall more specifically address parking for special events, and may include accommodations for oversized vehicles, valet parking operations, dedicated shuttles, or the availability of off-site parking. Once approved, the plan would be recorded against the property with the county.

Agency/Public Comments

The application has been routed to the Mammoth Community Water District (MCWD) and the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD). Comments were received from both agencies and have been incorporated into the project and/or conditions of approval in the attached resolution (**Attachment 1**).

Additionally, a Public Notice for the February 9, 2022, Planning and Economic Development Commission hearing and a project description was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject property on January 25, 2022 and was published in The Sheet on January 29, 2022. Staff has received a request for a copy of the staff report for the project but has not received any public comments on the project at the time this staff report was published. The public hearing notice is included as **Attachment 8**.

III. STAFF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed project meets the applicable requirements and recommends that the Planning and Economic Development Commission adopt the attached Planning and Economic Development Commission Resolution, making the required CEQA and Municipal Code findings, and approving Design Review 21-005 and Use Permit 21-005 with conditions as recommended by staff or with modifications.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Planning and Economic Development Commission Resolution

Exhibit A: Planning Division Conditions

Attachment 2: Project Plans dated January 28, 2022

Attachment 3: Project Narrative

Attachment 4: 1/9/22 ADP Meeting Minutes and Applicant Responses

Attachment 5: Alternative Housing Mitigation Plan

Attachment 6: Events Management Plan

Attachment 7: Parking Analysis

Attachment 8: Public Hearing Notice