

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

PO Box 347
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
760.924.1800 phone, 924.1801 fax
commdev@mono.ca.gov

PO Box 8
Bridgeport, CA 93517
760.932.5420 phone, 932.5431 fax
www.monocounty.ca.gov

MEETING AGENDA

March 10, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.

Dana Room-Mono County Civic Center
1290 Tavern Rd Mammoth Lakes, CA

This meeting will be held in person at the location listed above. Additionally, a teleconference location will be available where the public and members of the Commission may participate by electronic means. Members of the public may participate in person and via the Zoom Webinar, including listening to the meeting and providing comment, by following the instructions below.

TELECONFERENCE INFORMATION

1. Bridgeport Teleconference Location- Mono County CAO Conferences Room, First floor Annex 1, 74 N. School Street, Bridgeport, CA 93517.

2. Joining via Zoom

You may participate in the Zoom Webinar, including listening to the meeting and providing public comment, by following the instructions below.

To join the meeting by computer

Visit: <https://monocounty.zoom.us/j/85467870748>

Or visit <https://www.zoom.us/> and click on "Join A Meeting." Use Zoom Meeting ID: 854 6787 0748 To provide public comment (at appropriate times) during the meeting, press the "Raise Hand" hand button on your screen and wait to be acknowledged by the Chair or staff. Please keep all comments to 3 minutes.

To join the meeting by telephone

Dial (669) 900-6833, then enter Webinar ID: 854 6787 0748

To provide public comment (at appropriate times) during the meeting, press *9 to raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by the Chair or staff. Please keep all comments to 3 minutes.

**Agenda sequence (see note following agenda).*

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Opportunity to address the LTC on items not on the agenda. Please refer to the Teleconference information section to determine how to make public comment for this meeting.
3. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**
 - a) Approval of minutes from February 10, 2025 (pg. 1)
 - b) Receive and file Local Transportation Fund (LTF) FY 25-26 estimate (pg. 4)

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Kreitz Paul McFarland Rhonda Duggan Chris Bubser Bill Sauser Brent Truax

4. **ADMINISTRATION** –none
5. **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**
 - a) WORKSHOP: Presentation on Mono County trails policies and programs (*Olya Egorov/ Marcella Rose*) (pg. 6)
 - b) WORKSHOP: Presentation on Town of Mammoth Lakes trails policies and programs (*Lawson Reif*)
6. **CALTRANS**
 - a) Update on Caltrans activities in Mono County (*CT staff*)
7. **TRANSIT**
 - a) Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) Appointment (*Aaron Washco*) (pg. 33)
 - b) ESTA Update (*Phil Moores*)
 - c) YARTS Update (*Christine Chavez*)
8. **CORRESPONDENCE**
 - a) SF Gate article on ESTA’s services (pg. 37)
9. **REPORTS**
 - a) Co-Executive Directors, including update on status of Reds Meadow Road (pg. 48)
 - b) Commissioners
10. **INFORMATIONAL** – none
11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS**
 - a) Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
12. **ADJOURN TO April 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.**

***NOTE:** Although the LTC generally strives to follow the agenda sequence, it reserves the right to take any agenda item – other than a noticed public hearing – in any order, and at any time after its meeting starts. The Local Transportation Commission encourages public attendance and participation.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, anyone who needs special assistance to attend this meeting can contact the commission secretary at 760-924-1804 within 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to ensure accessibility (see 42 USCS 12132, 28CFR 35.130).

COMMISSIONERS

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Draft Minutes

February 10, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.

Mono County Civic Center

Mammoth Lakes, CA

Dana Room

Zoom- <https://monocounty.zoom.us/j/85036171472>

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Jennifer Kreitz, Paul McFarland

TOWN COMMISSIONERS: Bill Sauser, Brent Truax, Rob Patterson

LTC STAFF: Heidi Willson, Deanna Tuetken, Aaron Washco, Wendy Sugimura, Haislip Hayes, Marcella Rose, Olya Egorov,

CALTRANS: Jill Tognazzini, Rick Franz

ESTA: Jaret Chythk

YARTS: None

Public: Karl Seiberling, Kim

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 9:02 am and the Commissioner McFarland led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: Opportunity to address the LTC on items not on the agenda. Please refer to the Teleconference information section to determine how to make public comment for this meeting.

- No public comment

3. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

a) Approval of minutes from December 9, 2024

b) Receive and accept LTC Financial Statement with Independent Auditor's Report ending June 30, 2024. *(Deanna Tuetken)*

Motion: Approve the consent agenda as presented.

Truax motion; McFarland second.

Roll-call vote – Ayes: Sauser, Trueax, Patterson, McFarland, Kreitz.

Motion Passed 5-0.

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Kreitz Paul McFarland Rhonda Duggan Chris Bubser Bill Sauser Brent Truax

4. ADMINISTRATION

a) Appoint a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2025

Motion: Appoint Commissioner Sauser as Chair.

Truax motion; Kreitz second.

Roll-call vote – Ayes: Sauser, Trueax, Patterson, McFarland, Kreitz.

Motion Passed 5-0.

Motion: Appoint Commissioner McFarland as Vice Chair.

Sauser motion; Kreitz second.

Roll-call vote – Ayes: Sauser, Trueax, Patterson, McFarland, Kreitz.

Motion Passed 5-0.

b) Review of FY 2025-2026 Overall Work Program Draft (*Olya Egorov*)

- Egorov gave a presentation on the draft Overall Work Program and answered questions from the Commission. The Commission discussed the addition of the budget; no direction was given for edits or modifications.

5. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION – none

a) No local transportation update provided

6. CALTRANS

a) Update on Caltrans activities in Mono County (*CT staff*)

- Tognazzini gave a report and answered questions from the Commission.

7. TRANSIT

a) Workshop on Unmet Transit Needs Process (*Aaron Washco*)

- Washco provided the Commission with a workshop on how Unmet Transit needs process works and answered questions from the Commission.

b) Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) Appointments (*Aaron Washco*)

- Washco requested that the Commission reappoint Social Services Transportation Advisory Council members.

Motion: Appoint Rick Franz and re-appoint Molly DesBaillets, Dawn Vidal, and Phil Moores to the SSTAC.

McFarland motion; Kreitz second.

Roll-call vote – Ayes: Sauser, Trueax, Patterson, McFarland, Kreitz.

Motion Passed 5-0.

c) ESTA Update (*Phil Moores*)

- Chythk gave a report and answered questions from the Commission.

d) YARTS Update (*Christine Chavez*)

- No YARTS staff were available for a update.

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Kreitz Paul McFarland Rhonda Duggan Chris Bubser Bill Sauser Brent Truax

8. **CORRESPONDENCE** – none
9. **REPORTS**
 - a) Co-Executive Directors
 - Sugimura briefly went over the provide report and answered questions from the Commission.
 - b) Commissioners
 - No Commissioner reports.
10. **INFORMATIONAL** – none
11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS**
 - a) Recreation update
12. **ADJOURN at 10:09 am to March 10, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.**

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Kreitz Paul McFarland Rhonda Duggan Chris Bubser Bill Sauser Brent Truax

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March 10, 2025

TO: Mono County Local Transportation Commission

FROM: Deanna Tuetken, Fiscal & Administrative Services Officer

RE: Local Transportation Account (LTF) projections for FY 2025-26

RECOMMENDATION

None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2025-26 estimate from the Mono County Auditor/Controller Office for LTF funding is \$901,971. Allocation of these funds is guided by the Transportation Development Act. The 2025-26 estimate is \$65,183 above the 2024-25 estimate.

DISCUSSION

The Mono County Local Transportation Commission (LTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) responsible for apportioning and administering the Local Transportation Fund in accordance with the Transportation Development Act. The Local Transportation Fund is comprised of 0.25% of local sales and use tax distributed by the State Board of Equalization monthly based on sales tax collected in each county. Annually, the Mono County Director of Finance provides the Local Transportation Commission with an estimate for the Local Transportation Fund revenue for the upcoming fiscal year based on a 10-year rolling average. The Mono County LTF 2024-25 estimate was \$836,788. The projection for 2025-26 is \$901,971. Each year, the LTC adopts a resolution establishing how these funds will be allocated. The recommended annual resolution is based on the Local Transportation Act, Auditor's LTF estimate, unmet transit needs, the submitted claimant letters and direction from the Commission. The LTC will bring a resolution in June 2025 apportioning and allocating 2025-26 LTF projected revenues.

For questions regarding this item, please contact Deanna Tuetken at 760-924-1816.

ATTACHMENT

- LTF 2025-26 auditor estimate



DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER COUNTY OF MONO

Kim Bunn
Assistant Finance Director
Auditor-Controller

Janet Dutcher, DPA, MPA, CPA, CGFM
Director of Finance

Vacant
Chief Deputy Treasurer – Tax Collector
Treasurer - Tax Collector

February 11, 2025

Mono County Local Transportation Commission
P.O. Box 8
Bridgeport, CA 93517

RE: California Code of Regulations Title 21, Division 3, Chapter 2
Transportation Development Article 3 Section 6620 (Annual LTF Estimate)

Assuming there are no unallocated funds as of June 30, 2025, the monies available for allocation by the Local Transportation Commission during the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 are estimated to be \$901,971, determined as follows:

LTF Estimated Revenues for FY 2025-26	
267-00-000-17010	
	<u>FY 25-26</u>
July	79,436
August	65,130
September	81,286
October	106,530
November	69,638
December	68,737
January	66,975
February	79,639
March	70,433
April	71,246
May	74,592
June	68,328
Annual Estimate	901,971

Please contact me if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

Janet Dutcher

Janet Dutcher, DPA, MPA, CPA, CGFM
Director of Finance
Mono County, CA

Cc: Wendy Sugimura, Community Development Director (Mono County)
Deanna Tuetken, Community Development Administrative Services Specialist (Mono County)

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Staff Report

TO: Mono County Local Transportation Commission

DATE: March 10, 2025

FROM: Olya Egorov, Planning Analyst, and Marcella Rose, Outdoor Recreation Manager

SUBJECT: Mono County Trails Policies and Programs

RECOMMENDATIONS

Review, discuss, and modify as desired the policies and objectives located in the adopted 2024 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that have a transportation and outdoor recreation nexus. Provide additional staff direction, if necessary.

BACKGROUND

The Outdoor Recreation Manager position was created in 2020 to facilitate, expedite, and enable efficient and productive interagency relationships on short, medium, and long-term planning and implementation of projects, programs, and activities related to public lands recreation and resource protection. The Outdoor Recreation Manager oversees the Mono County Sustainable Outdoors and Recreation (MCSOAR) division of Public Works and focuses on enhancing recreational access and opportunity through these productive interagency relationships for the economic benefit of Mono County communities and for the conservation of the lands and scenic assets we call home. Several of the projects within MCSOAR have a transportation nexus.

DISCUSSION

The unpaved roadway, trail, and path systems are unique and limited throughout Mono County. The access points to these systems are destinations that must be served by the conventional transportation system; simultaneously, these networks are used to access services within and between unincorporated communities. Many of these facilities are explicitly dedicated to non-motorized activities, including walking and mountain biking, and a handful of these facilities accommodate Off-Highway-Vehicles (OHVs). The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) includes policies to address the trail network as part of the Mono County transportation system (see Attachment 1).

In 2015, Mono County adopted a Trails Master Plan, which was added as an Appendix to the RTP (see Attachment 2). The objective of the Trails Master Plan was to facilitate and assess the need for further development of multimodal travel and recreation in partnership with land managers within and between the unincorporated communities, and to categorize existing and future trails into non-motorized facilities or recreation. The Trails Master Plan is scheduled for an update in the next RTP cycle which will take place in 2027. One goal of the update will be to consolidate the RTP and Trails Plan policies and eliminate redundancies.

Please contact Olya Egorov (ogorov@mono.ca.gov) or Marcella Rose (mrose@mono.ca.gov) with any questions. This staff report has been reviewed by the LTC Co-Executive Director.

ATTACHMENTS

1. RTP Trails Policy Excerpts
2. 2015 Mono County Trails Plan

ATTACHMENT 1
TRAILS POLICIES, 2024 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
(ADOPTED DECEMBER 2024)

CHAPTER 4: REGIONAL POLICY ELEMENT

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND POLICIES

Goal 2. Plan and implement a transportation and circulation system that is responsive to the county's economic needs and fiscal constraints and that maintains the economic integrity of the county's communities.

Policy 2.A. Continue to develop and implement public/private partnerships for the development, operation, and maintenance of transportation improvements in the county.

Objective 2.A.1. Seek partnership opportunities for the following projects:

- Countywide bicycle and pedestrian trail development; ...

Time Frame: Within the 10-year short-term time frame of this plan.

Objective 2.C.2. Develop bicycle, pedestrian, parking, trail, and transit facilities that enhance accessibility to and around community areas and recreation destinations and manage off-highway vehicle (OHV) use.

Time Frame: See policies for non-motorized facilities later in this chapter.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Goal 8. Plan and implement a transportation and circulation system that provides for livable communities, while maintaining efficient traffic flow, reducing vehicle miles traveled and alternative transportation modes to the automobile.

Policy 8.B. Increase safety, mobility and access for pedestrians and bicyclists within community areas.

Objective 8.B.2. Maintain an up-to-date Bicycle Plan and Trails plan to provide networks for pedestrians and bicyclists that are as safe as the network for motorists. Functional, safe and secure travel ways for pedestrians and bicyclists may include the following measures:

- Sidewalks with ample widths or soft surface paths and trails where sidewalks are not feasible
- Curbs and gutters
- Planter strips to separate sidewalks from the street
- Parked cars along the street
- Crosswalk at appropriate intervals that meet warrants and provide logical pathways
- Raised medians with pedestrian refuges were warranted on wide streets
- Context-sensitive lighting
- Bus pullouts for regional and intra-city bus service

- Bicycle lanes in town centers serving as a 5- or 6-foot buffer between the parking lane or sidewalk and the travel lane
- Snow removal
- Curb extensions
- Pedestrian activated and oriented warning lights

Time frame: Ongoing over the 20-year time frame of this plan; implement at time of project approval.

Objective 8.B.3. Provide pedestrians and bicyclists with shortcuts and alternatives to travel along high-volume streets; e.g., separate trails along direct routes and new access points for walking and biking.

Time frame: Ongoing over the 20-year time frame of this plan; implement at time of project approval.

ACTIVE AND NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Goal 12. Provide for the use of non-motorized means of transportation, which increases the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking, increases the safety and mobility of non-motorized users, enhances public health, and provides a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

Policy 12.A. Develop and implement multi-modal transportation plans, programs and projects for all community areas to provide for the development of well-coordinated and designed nonmotorized and motorized transportation facilities.

Objective 12.A.1. Update multi-modal policies and programs for the Town and County, including the Mono County Trails Plan (Appendix G) and Bicycle Transportation Plan (Appendix H).

Time frame: Ongoing within the next five years as funding becomes available.

Policy 12.B. Seek opportunities for federal, state, county, town, and private participation, when appropriate, in the construction and maintenance of non-motorized facilities.

Objective 12.B.1. Seek partnership opportunities for the following projects:

- Countywide bicycle and pedestrian trail development within the established communities identified as areas for future development as identified in the Housing Element of the General Plan; ...

Time frame: Within the 10-year short-term time frame of this plan.

Policy 12.D. Plan for and provide a continuous and easily accessible trail system within the region, particularly in June Lake and other community areas (see the June Lake Loop Trails Plan). When possible, use existing roads and trails to develop a trail system. Connect the trail system to commercial and recreational areas, parking facilities, residential areas, and transit services. See the Mono County General Plan Conservation/Open Space Element and the Mono County Trails Plan for additional policies relating to trails.

Objective 12.D.1. Work with appropriate agencies, organizations, and community groups to further develop the proposed Towns to Trails and Eastern Sierra Regional Trail

(ESRT) for Mono County. Towns to Trails is a regional effort to connect the communities in Alpine, Mono, and Inyo Counties via the existing trail and road networks where feasible. The ESRT is currently a conceptual plan for a trail system that would increase recreational opportunities in the county as well as provide crucial linkages to and between communities that are currently not met with existing modes of transit. The conceptual plan includes both historic-route sections and community-route sections.

Time frame: Within the next 10 years, during the short-term time frame of this plan.

Objective 12.D.3. Update the Trails Plan and work with other communities in the unincorporated county on trail plan development based on the level of community interest and staff capacity.

Time frame: Within the next 10 years, during the short-term time frame of this plan.

TRANSIT

Goal 13. Assist with development and maintenance of transit systems as a component of multi-modal transportation systems in Mono County.

Policy 13.B. Promote the development of an inter-modal transportation system in Mono County that coordinates the design and implementation of transit systems with housing, parking facilities (vehicle and bicycle), trail systems, and airport facilities.

Objective 13.B.1. Coordinate the design and implementation of transit systems with housing, parking facilities (vehicle and bicycle), trail systems, and airport facilities, including convenient transfers among transit routes and various transportation modes. Explore weather-proof bus facilities to encourage year-round ridership and qualify for funding sources (e.g., housing grants).

Time frame: Ongoing over the 20-year time frame of this plan; implement at the time of project planning and design.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY POLICY ELEMENT

ANTELOPE VALLEY

Goal 18. Provide and maintain an orderly, safe, and efficient transportation system that preserves the rural character of the Antelope Valley.

Objective 18.C. Provide a loop trail system in the Valley for use by bicyclists and pedestrians.

Policy 18.C.1. Seek funding for development of multi-use and single-purpose trails along routes to be identified in the Valley.

Action 18.C.1.a. Refine and implement the Mountain Gate Park Recreation and Revitalization Project Master Plan; maintain existing amenities, trails and recreation opportunities at Mountain Gate Park.

SWAUGER CREEK AND DEVIL'S GATE

Goal 19. Provide and maintain a circulation system that maintains the rural character of the area.

Objective 19.A. Correlate circulation improvements and future land use development

Policy 19.A.2. Explore community interest and feasibility of creating trails or recreational opportunities, including by method of designating existing County easements along Swauger Creek as recreational access.

BRIDGEPORT VALLEY

Goal 20. Provide and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system in the Valley while retaining the rural qualities of the area and supporting a vibrant local Main Street.

Objective 20.B. Support recreation and trails improvements that increase connectivity within Bridgeport and to adjacent communities, and provide for multiple user groups, including nonmotorized, motorized, and equestrian users (e.g., a multi-use system).

Policy 20.B.2. Implement the Bridgeport policies and programs in the Mono County Trails and Bike Plan (see appendices).

Policy 20.B.5. Support the ability for trail users and recreationalists outside the Bridgeport Valley to come into town by advertising and encouraging services such as a free hiker shuttle. ESTA will currently pick up passengers along US 395 by arrangement.

BODIE HILLS

Goal 21. Provide for multiple modes of access to Bodie to enhance safe, convenient travel and accessibility for Bodie visitors, in a manner consistent with the Bodie Experience.

Objective 21.B. Provide for alternative modes of travel into Bodie.

Policy 21.B.2. Develop a trails system for the Bodie Hills that provides for equestrian, cycling, and pedestrian use.

Action 21.B.2.a. Inventory existing trails in the Bodie Hills. Request State Parks to inventory trails within the Historic Park.

Action 21.B.2.b. Identify in this plan, the Mono County Trails Plan, the Bodie State Historic Park Management Plan, and the BLM North of Bishop Off Highway Vehicle Plan, pedestrian, bicycle and/or equestrian trails that will provide alternative access into Bodie. Existing trails, rather than new trails, should be utilized to access an area whenever practical.

Action 21.B.2.c. Avoid development of, or promotion of, trails crossing private property without the landowner's consent.

Action 21.B.2.e. Seek grants and other funding for trail system development.

Action 21.B.2.f. Prioritize trail development/improvement projects in this plan to expedite applications for grant funding.

Action 21.B.2.g. Coordinate trail development with other modes of travel; provide trail linkages to the visitor center, parking areas, transit hubs and recreation nodes.

Action 21.B.2.j. Consider winter use for appropriate trails. Designate applicable trails available for Nordic ski, snowshoe, and snowmobile use.

MONO BASIN

Goal 22. Provide and maintain a multi-modal circulation system and related facilities that promote the orderly, safe, and efficient movement of visitors, residents, goods and services

within the Mono Basin; that invites pedestrian use, provides for pedestrian and cyclist safety and contributes to the vitality and attractiveness of the Lee Vining community; and that facilitates travel to Yosemite and other nearby points of interest.

Objective 22.B. Provide a comprehensive coordinated trail system in the Basin for use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians.

Policy 22.B.1. Periodically review, update and implement the Mono Basin portions of the Mono County Trails and Bikeway Plan.

Action 22.B.1.a. Work with government and private property owners to create recreational trail segments connecting population centers with attractions and recreation access points.

Action 22.B.1.b. Identify desired trail segments that are supported by the community and implement trail development.

Action 22.B.1.c. Identify and consider impacts to historic lifestyles and existing uses of any potential trail and consult with the Kutzadika Tribe in particular.

Action 22.B.1.h. Participate with the National Park Service, USFS, Caltrans and other agencies in the Mono-Yosemite trail planning effort and incorporate appropriate outcomes into the Eastern Sierra Scenic Byway and Regional Trail System.

Objective 22.D. Continue to explore additional elements that may be suitable for the comprehensive streetscape plan for the Lee Vining commercial district that enhance pedestrian safety, connectivity (including trails) and make Lee Vining a more attractive place to walk, live, and work.

YOSEMITE

Goal 23. Yosemite National Park is a national and worldwide treasure that must be protected and preserved. Bordering the Park's eastern boundary and serving as its only access point from Eastern California, Mono County is an important component of the Yosemite region. Through its transportation planning efforts, the Mono LTC will assist in the preservation and protection of the Park while still providing for visitor enjoyment, by strengthening the relationship between the Yosemite region and its eastern access through communities along the US 395 corridor.

Objective 23.B. Improve opportunities for access by alternative modes (transit, bicycles, pedestrians, air, other non-auto modes).

Policy 23.B.4. Maintenance and improvement projects on SR 120 should focus on accommodating alternative transportation modes, particularly cycling. Provide connections to trails, appropriate signage, and staging areas for cyclists.

Objective 24.D. Provide for safe and consistent access through Yosemite National Park to its eastern gateway.

Policy 24.D.5. Maintenance and improvement projects on SR/Highway 120 should focus on improving safety, including providing turnouts to allow for safe stops and passing areas, and/or a fast lane/express lane for buses and pass holders (e.g., Wawona Road).

Facilities for cyclists and pedestrians should include trailhead parking retention, signage, safe road crossings, etc.

JUNE LAKE

Goal 25. Provide and maintain a multi-modal circulation system and related facilities that promote the orderly, safe, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services, and preserve the mountain village character of June Lake.

Objective 25.A. Promote the development of a multi-modal circulation system that reduces vehicular congestion and enhances safety and accessibility.

Policy 25.A.4. Promote traffic safety and sight-seeing opportunities by maintaining low travel speeds along SR 158 and North Shore Drive.

Action 25.A.4.d. Work with local partners (Chamber of Commerce, Women's Club, June Lake Trails, June Lake Junction LLC, etc.) to staff the June Lake Kiosk at the south June Lake Junction into the starting and ending point of the selfguided June Lake Loop scenic highway tour. Audio files and literature on the scenic features of the June Lake Loop could be borrowed and returned at the Kiosk.

Objective 25.C. Provide for a circulation system that facilitates commercial infill and redevelopment in the Village.

Policy 25.C.4. Promote the development of crosswalks, sidewalks, neckdowns¹³, public sitting areas, and pedestrian trails in the Village that enhance safety, complement the non-motorized vehicle trails, and promote the Village's pedestrian atmosphere.

Action 25.C.4.d. Coordinate a trail-signing program.

Action 25.C.4.e. Delineate roadside trails along existing roadways in the June Lake Village. Roadside pathways should be integrated with trails, trailheads or activity centers located on National Forest lands. Provide for several pedestrian access trails to link residential areas to SR 158 commercial areas.

Objective 25.D. Promote the development of a West Village/Rodeo Grounds circulation system that provides for multiple modes of transportation and promotes a pedestrian atmosphere.

Policy 25.D.1. West Village/Rodeo Grounds Specific Plans should provide for development that encourages visitors to leave their cars and use alternative modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling or shuttle bus service

Action 25.D.1.a. Work with developers through the Specific Plan processes to provide pedestrian trails and amenities, bicycle/Nordic ski trails, shuttle bus facilities, and if desirable, direct ski lift access.

Objective 25.F. Promote the development of a multi-modal circulation system that adequately provides for the needs of residents and visitors, while maintaining and protecting the June Lake Loop's natural and scenic resources.

Policy 25.F.1. Design and enforce roadway construction measures that protect natural and scenic resources.

Action 25.F.1.a. Use the development review process to ensure that road and trail crossings do not alter stream courses or increase erosion and siltation.

Objective 25.H. Promote the use of non-motorized forms of transportation to minimize the impact of the automobile in the Village, West Village/Rodeo Grounds, and Down Canyon areas and to create pedestrian-oriented areas.

Policy 25.H.1. Provide, where feasible, paths for non-motorized modes of transportation (e.g., pedestrians, Nordic skiers or bicyclists) on rights of way separate from auto roadways. These paths should link major lodging and parking facilities with recreational and commercial centers and should be maintained year-round.

Action 25.H.1.a. Connect parking facilities with commercial and recreational nodes using paths suitable for non-motorized modes of transportation; e.g., pedestrian, bicycle/Nordic ski trails.

Objective 25.K. Promote the construction of public parking facilities that reduce congestion on the circulation system, concentrate usage in specified areas, promote the use of alternatives to the automobile, and complement the pedestrian-oriented village concept.

Policy 25.K.1. Promote the development of public parking facilities to encourage day use of under-utilized areas, particularly if visitation congestion disperses to other sites due to the fees at June Lake Beach.

Action 25.K.1.a. Work with the LTC, Caltrans and the USFS to improve parking facilities near appropriate day-use areas and near backcountry trailheads.

Objective 25.L. Promote the construction of enclosed, covered parking to improve June Lake's appearance and lessen the extent of snow removal.

Policy 25.L.2. Residential and commercial development in Specific Plan areas should provide underground or covered parking with convenient access to pedestrian trails and alternative modes of transit. Density bonuses in Specific Plan areas will apply.

Objective 25.N. Develop a trail system that enhances recreational opportunities, promotes nonmotorized vehicle use and links recreational activity areas with commercial or residential areas.

Policy 25.N.1. Develop a trail system that links recreational activity centers with each other or developed areas with recreational activity areas, consistent with the June Lake Loop Trail Plan/Map.

Action 25.N.1.a. Ensure that future development, particularly in the Rodeo Grounds/West Village Specific Plan areas, provides trail easements that are consistent with and complementary to the trails in the June Lake Loop Trail Plan/Map and that preserve access to adjoining public lands.

Policy 25.N.2. Ensure that maintenance costs are factored into the design of the trail system. Action 25.N.2.a. Work with the USFS, Friends of the Inyo, June Lake Trails Committee, other agencies, and community groups to maintain developed trails.

Policy 25.N.3. Work with federal, state and local agencies as well as community groups to acquire funding for the development and maintenance of trails.

Policy 25.N.4. Where feasible, promote Nordic (cross country) skiing on pedestrian trails.

LONG VALLEY

Goal 27. Provide and maintain a safe and efficient circulation system in Long Valley while retaining the rural qualities of the area.

Objective 27.A. Provide a coordinated trail system for use by bicyclists, pedestrians, or equestrians.

Policy 27.A.1. Pursue feasibility and local support for development of the following regional trail connections:

- Towns to Trails;
- Long Valley to the Convict Lake Road to enable non-motorized travel off US 395;
- Around Crowley Lake on Benton Crossing Road;
- Long Valley to Mammoth Lakes, possibly with a spur Whitmore Recreation Ball Fields and Pool; and
- Tom's Place to Lower Rock Creek Road.

Action 27.A.1.a. Explore the feasibility, opportunities, issues and constraints of each trail segment and consider prioritizing.

Action 27.A.1.b. Seek available funding sources for trail improvements and ongoing maintenance costs.

Policy 27.A.2. Integrate the trail system with other trail efforts, for example by the BLM and Community Service Area #1.

Policy 27.A.2. Identify, formalize and utilize existing trails and pathways for connectivity within communities.

Action 27.A.2.a. Revisit previous Trails Plan and consider updating and formalizing the existing trail inventory.

Action 27.A.2.b. Explore winter trails and recreation opportunities.

Objective 27.B. Provide safety improvements on local streets and Highways.

Policy 27.B.1. Support efforts to connect Lower Rock Creek Road to Crowley Lake Drive south of Tom's Place and eliminate the US 395/Lower Rock Creek Road intersection.

Action 27.B.1.a. Pursue a paved trail from Tom's Place to Lower Rock Creek Road to provide non-motorized safety benefits if the road realignment proves infeasible or cannot be implemented in a reasonable time frame.

WHEELER CREST

Goal 28. Provide an improved transportation system that serves the mobility needs of local residents.

Objective 28.A. Promote a transportation system that protects and accesses the unique scenic, recreational and environmental resources of the Wheeler Crest area

Policy 28.A.1. Plan and develop alternate transportation modes in coordination with future road improvements and extensions (i.e., bikeways, hiking and equestrian trails).

TRI-VALLEY

Goal 30. Provide a safe and convenient transportation system in the Tri-Valley.

Objective 30.A. Provide a safe transportation system that serves all users and promotes the scenic values of the adjacent lands.

Policy 30.A.2. Provide a bike route from the Inyo/Mono county line to the intersection of US 6 and SR 120 in Benton.

Action 30.A.2.b. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a bike trail along the abandoned railway right of way east of US 6 in Mono County.

MONO COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

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I. PURPOSE OF PLAN

The overall purpose of the Mono County Trails Plan is to establish trail systems that facilitate multi-modal travel and recreation within, around and between unincorporated communities in the county. The Plan addresses regional routes that provide access to communities throughout the county and to major recreational areas and existing trail systems, and community routes that provide access throughout communities and to surrounding recreational areas.

The Trails Plan is intended to expand upon and implement policies in the Mono County General Plan, associated Area Plans, the Mono County Regional Transportation Plan, and to coordinate with the applicable plans of federal land management agencies. The Plan focuses primarily on the development of facilities for recreational users, both residents and visitors.

Specific purposes of the Plan are to inventory existing trail systems in the county and to provide a concise summary of those systems, to evaluate the needs of the County's communities for new local community routes and the possibility of linking existing routes, to designate routes and prioritize their development, and to delineate policies for the future development of trails systems in the county.

II. EXISTING TRAILS SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

INVENTORY OF EXISTING TRAILS SYSTEMS

Trail:

- a. *A track made by passage, especially through a wilderness.*
- b. *A marked path through a forest or mountainous region.*
- c. *A course followed or to be followed.*

-- *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*

The term "trail" can encompass a wide variety of uses when it is defined as a course to be followed. Trails in Mono County, with its many recreational resources, include wilderness trails used by hikers and equestrian users, dirt roads used by off-highway vehicles and equestrian users, signed trails for Nordic skiing and snowmobile use, scenic byways used as sightseeing trails, hiking trails at developed recreation sites, and roadways used by both mountain bikers and touring bicyclists. Trails serve two purposes – recreational experience for those who travel along them and as link between different areas of the county.

Since so much of the land in the county is publicly owned (approximately 94%), most of the existing trail systems in the county are on public lands and are managed by either the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) or the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The California State Park units in the county, Bodie State Historic Park and Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, contain internal trails systems used by visitors to the parks. The highway system in Mono County also functions as a trail system, primarily for motorists and bicyclists.

USFS/INYO NATIONAL FOREST AND USFS/HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST TRAILS

Lands administered by the USFS in Mono County contain extensive trails systems ranging from backcountry wilderness trails to paved recreational trails in concentrated recreation areas. The Land and Resource Management Plans for both the Inyo National Forest and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest contain policy direction for trails and roadways for each of the land management areas in the forests. In addition, the Forests have developed specific plans and resources for different types of uses, such as the Humboldt-Toiyabe Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area Plan and the Interagency Off-Highway Vehicle Trail Maps by the Inyo National Forest and the BLM.

Public lands administered by the USFS run the entire length of the county on its western border, running east to US Highway 395 and in some cases, farther. These are the most heavily used and developed Forest lands, with more concentrated

recreational areas and facilities adjacent to communities or major recreation areas such as June Mountain Ski Area and the June Lake Loop. Other Forest lands in the eastern part of the county are less developed and have fewer users.

The corridor from Mammoth Lakes to June Lake is one of the most heavily used in the southern portion of the county, while the Twin Lakes and Sonora Pass areas are popular in the northern portion of the county. National Forests have many developed recreational facilities, including campgrounds, picnic areas, trail heads, and signed trails for hiking, biking, equestrian, snowmobile, and Nordic ski use.

Maps of trail systems on the forests are available from district ranger stations and visitor centers. In addition, a number of specialized maps have been developed showing cross country ski trails, snowmobile routes, and mountain bike routes, particularly for the heavily used area between Mammoth Lakes and June Lake. The Interagency OHV maps provide detailed mapping of roads for the Inyo National Forest.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TRAILS

Public lands administered by the BLM in Mono County do not generally contain developed trails systems. They do contain an extensive system of dirt roads used by hunters, anglers, equestrians, OHV users, and others wishing to explore the more arid sagebrush scrub and pinyon-juniper communities found on BLM lands in the county. Generally, marked roads are major routes between various areas in the county, such as the roads leading from US Highway 6 in the Tri-Valley area to the Crowley Lake area.

The BLM Resource Management Plan contains policy direction for trails and roadways. The BLM has also developed the North of Bishop Vehicle Access Strategy Plan for the Bodie Hills and for the lands it manages in the Bridgeport Valley and Antelope Valley areas. The overall intent of the BLM is to maintain semi-primitive conditions on the lands it manages and not to develop facilities on those lands.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION TRAILS

The California Department of Parks and Recreation updated Recreational Trails Plan in 2002. The Plan focuses on....: Bicycling; Boating; Off-Road Vehicle Use; and Hiking and Equestrian Use. Each element describes existing conditions, states goals and objectives, and identifies recommended projects. Projects are recommended in areas of high demand, generally near urban areas. The Plan contains useful information concerning trail system development, including design standards and guidelines. There are no proposed state trail systems in Mono County, although each of the county's State Park units, Bodie State Historic Park, and Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, contains internal trail systems. Trails within the Bodie State Historic Park are addressed within the Bodie State Historic Park Resource Management Plan.

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES: "MAMMOTH LAKES TRAIL SYSTEM"

The "Mammoth Lakes Trail System" is a partnered effort of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the US Forest Service to implement the Town's 2011 "Trail System Master Plan." The Town and the US Forest Service have executed several agreements to facilitate the effort, and the citizens of Mammoth Lakes have approved funding resources for implementation through Measures "R" and "U". The Town has contracted with Mammoth Lakes Recreation, a community benefit non-profit corporation established by the Town, to provide oversight for the Mammoth Lakes Trail System program and the Town has hired a full time Trails Coordinator. The primary uses of the proposed multi-use trail system are described on the "Activities" section of the Mammoth Lakes Trail System website at mammothtrails.org. Trails identified in the Plan as "Future/Alternative Trails" would connect trails and bikeways within the more-developed area of the town to trails in the adjacent unincorporated area. Please contact the Town's Trails Coordinator for more information on the Town's "Trail System Master Plan" and the Mammoth Lakes Trail System.

SIGHTSEEING TRAILS – SCENIC BYWAYS

Sightseeing is a major recreational activity in Mono County that occurs primarily along the highways. US Highway 395 (US 395) through the county, State Route 120 (SR 120) in Lee Vining Canyon, State Route 158 (SR 158) in the June Lake Loop, and State Route 270 (SR 270) to Bodie are heavily used for sightseeing and touring.

A major portion of US 395 is a state-designated scenic highway. SR 120 in Lee Vining Canyon is a National Forest Scenic Byway, and the Forest Plans and BLM Plan recommend scenic byway designations for several other roadways in the county. The Coalition for Unified Recreation in the Eastern Sierra (CURES) has made interpretive improvements along the scenic highway/byway 395 corridor in Mono County, including development of kiosks and informational materials along US 395 and SR 120 (Lee Vining Canyon) to enhance the sightseeing experience.

Visitors to the county would benefit from similar facilities along other local roadways, particularly along SR 158 (June Lake Loop), and SR 270 to Bodie, both of which are heavily used for sightseeing.

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE TRAILS

An extensive system of off-highway vehicle trails exists in the county, as discussed in the previous section on BLM trails. The BLM and USFS management goals for these routes are to maintain the existing semi-primitive recreational experience by providing a predominantly natural environment. The roads will remain dirt; there will be no developed facilities except for road signs on major routes and a few informational kiosks. The BLM and USFS have developed a “Tread Lightly” educational program for OHV users, similar to the program for wilderness users.

Outside the highway system, the County’s dirt-road system may be the most heavily used existing trail system. Not only are the roads used to provide access to recreational areas, they are also used as recreational experiences themselves, to provide access to resources such as firewood and as alternate access routes between different parts of the county.

PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

Pedestrian hiking trails are largely limited to backcountry trails on forest lands. In communities, pedestrian activities occur along streets and in some communities on limited sidewalk systems. Outside communities, hiking occurs on the extensive dirt road system and on public lands. The interest for additional pedestrian facilities outside community areas is growing and several communities are pursuing additional pedestrian facilities and related streetscape improvements.

NORDIC SKI TRAILS

There are marked Nordic ski trails at Smokey Bear Flat, near Mammoth, in the Deadman Summit area, and within June Lake. Nordic skiing also occurs on public lands in unmarked areas. Existing trails generally are not adjacent to communities in the county; there is some potential for additional trails near communities.

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

There are marked snowmobile trails at Smokey Bear Flat, near Mammoth, in the Deadman Summit area, and near June Lake. Snowmobile use also occurs on public lands in unmarked areas. Marked trails are often the result of cooperative efforts among the USFS, snowmobile enthusiast groups, and local snowmobile rental operators. Snowmobile use does occur on a limited basis immediately adjacent to community areas.

EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

Equestrian use occurs along existing roads and trails or along trails on public lands that are also used by hikers and bicyclists. Presently, there is concern from equestrian users over the sharing of trails with bicyclists. This issue needs to be resolved by all trail users. Equestrian users often trailer their horses to trail heads, or parking areas outside their communities. Visitors may use the services of an outfitter or a pack station.

MONO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The Mono County General Plan, updated in 2015, contains policies relating to trails and recreation in both the Circulation Element and the Conservation/Open Space Element. The General Plan Circulation element also includes trail systems maps and route descriptions for a trail system in the county.

MONO COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN POLICIES

The 2015 update of the Mono County Regional Transportation Plan contains the same policies and the same trail maps as the 2015 update of the county General Plan Circulation Element.

III. COMMUNITY TRAILS

ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

The following section addresses pertinent issues, opportunities, and constraints, including those identified in the Circulation Element of the General Plan and in the Regional Transportation Plan. Bikeways are discussed in the Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Demand for Trails

As the previous chapter noted, Mono County has numerous trails and roadways that provide various recreational experiences for visitors and residents. Regional routes, which are mostly roadways, provide accessibility to most areas of the county and to recreational areas. The system is fairly well established and consists of the highway system and dirt roads on public lands.

Community routes are less well established. Opportunities exist to develop new trails and to expand existing informal trails in community areas, and to provide trails that link community and recreational areas and facilities. Many community routes remain undeveloped.

In community areas, the primary need is for pedestrian and bike trails. Demand for other types of trail is limited and is often provided by facilities on public lands outside community areas. There is a potential, however, to create multiple-use trails. The seasonal nature of recreation in Mono County creates a need for different types of trails at different times of year. Trails providing pedestrian, biking, and equestrian opportunities in the summer work equally well as Nordic ski facilities in the winter.

Trails are in greater demand in certain communities than in others. Communities with concentrated recreational use and heavy visitation have a greater need for facilities than communities that are primarily residential in nature and that receive little recreational use.

Scenic Byways and Trails

Sightseeing along roadways is a major recreational activity with a number of scenic routes in Mono County. Scenic route designations include State Scenic Highways 395 and 89, Scenic Byways along SR 120 and US 395, and a number of other roads designated as County scenic highways. The Mono County Master Environmental Assessment provides a comprehensive overview of designated scenic routes within the region.

Off-Highway Vehicle Trails

Off-highway vehicle facilities include the existing system of roads and trails on public lands. The BLM's and USFS's management plans for those lands adequately address management needs, primarily the signing of major routes and public education concerning the need to tread lightly.

Because the road system is so extensive, it is easily accessible from points throughout the county, including community areas. Major access points are signed, and maps are available from the BLM and USFS showing those routes.

Pedestrian Trails

Two types of pedestrian trails exist in or adjacent to Mono County communities, sidewalks and walking/hiking trails or paths. Some communities have sidewalks, but no community has extensive pedestrian facilities. The County has no active program for striping or marking pedestrian facilities, nor has it been a major concern of Caltrans in the past. With increased recreational use, particularly in community areas during peak season, the need for markings and traffic direction for pedestrians is increasing in some communities.

Additional pedestrian improvements are needed in most communities. There is also a need to improve existing routes used by pedestrians, such as widening the shoulder on roadways or providing an alternate pedestrian route. Pedestrian improvements would benefit communities in several ways; i.e., facilitating links between transportation modes, economic development benefits resulting from more-active commercial areas, increased livability of communities and increased safety resulting from elimination of the pedestrian/vehicle conflict in winter.

Trail-side Facilities

Trail-side facilities can improve the user's enjoyment and understanding of the land and resources adjacent to and visible from a trail. Such facilities may include restrooms, drinking water, benches, picnic areas, parking areas for larger vehicles with horse trailers, and interpretive and way-finding signs. Trail-side facilities are most appropriate for developed trail systems, such as scenic byways and nature/interpretive trails, or at entrance points to less-developed trail systems, such as trail heads or major access roads to off-highway vehicle roads.

Public lands in Mono County contain a variety of trail-side facilities, including campgrounds, trail heads, picnic areas, and information kiosks. Trail-side facilities in community areas may include restrooms, benches, picnic areas, way-finding and interpretive signs, all typically concentrated in a rest area or park. Pedestrian amenities may also include improved lighting, landscaping paving, street furnishings (benches, drinking fountains, trash receptacles), improved street crossing, and improved access to parking areas.

Design Standards

Since Mono County has numerous trails and roads that range from somewhat rugged to extremely difficult, community trails should focus on providing accessibility for everyone. Trail-side facilities developed in conjunction with new or existing trails should be designed to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Since the focus of many trails and roads in Mono County is the scenic beauty of the surrounding environment, trails and associated facilities need to blend into that environment to the greatest extent possible. Similarly, in community areas trails and facilities need to be designed and constructed to complement the existing setting.

Environmental concerns regarding the construction of trails are addressed by the USFS Standard Trail Plans and Specifications. Design considerations for accessibility are addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Building Code.

A primary consideration in the design and construction of trails and facilities is the ongoing maintenance of those facilities. Facilities should be designed to be low maintenance and long-lasting. Cooperative maintenance should include all user organizations; i.e., hikers, bikers, and equestrians.

IV. ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS BY PLANNING AREA

ANTELOPE VALLEY

1. Recreation destinations in the area include Topaz Lake and the West Walker River. At Topaz Lake there is the potential to provide increased recreational opportunities, including hiking trails, rest areas, picnic areas, etc. The Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) manages the lake and owns much of the property surrounding the lake.
2. There is also the potential to develop public access trails to the West Walker River throughout the Valley. This would require cooperating with the WRID and private landowners who own most of the land in the valley adjacent to the river.
3. Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in the Antelope Valley occurs primarily on surrounding public lands.
4. There is an opportunity to enhance sightseeing in the Antelope Valley and to promote Walker as a gateway community to the Scenic Byway south of Walker.

SONORA JUNCTION/DEVIL'S GATE/SWAUGER CREEK

1. The Devil's Gate to the Swauger Creek area is an isolated residential area with limited year-round occupancy. Private parcels in the area are surrounded by public lands that provide recreational opportunities for residents.
2. Sonora Junction area includes river access, campgrounds, a pack station and associated trails generally located on public land.

BRIDGEPORT VALLEY

1. Major recreational destinations in the Bridgeport Valley include Bridgeport Reservoir and Twin Lakes. A bicycle route to Twin Lakes from Bridgeport, and to the state line on SR 182, is discussed in the Bicycle Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. The historic building tour included in town, staged from the Bridgeport Park next to the museum, is part of the Eastern Sierra Scenic Byway.
2. There is a need to enhance pedestrian facilities along US 395 from the Evans Tract to town, and along SR 182 from town to the residential areas along the reservoir. Residents, especially children, currently must walk along the highways.
3. OHV use in the Bridgeport Valley occurs on surrounding public lands. The BLM's North of Bishop Vehicle Access Strategy Plan addresses management of OHV activity on those lands.
4. Interest is high in creating a multi-use year-round trail system in the Valley that would function as bicycling, pedestrian, and/or equestrian trails in summer and Nordic skiing trails in winter. This would be particularly feasible on Timber Harvest Road and on a route between Timber Harvest Road and town.

BODIE

1. The Bodie Bowl area is both a State Historic Park and National Historic Landmark. The remoteness of Bodie provides excellent opportunities for enjoyment of this historic ghost town and its scenic backdrop; and is a major recreational attraction for Mono County. Alternative modes of transportation are encouraged in the Bodie Bowl Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Bodie Hills Planning Area Cooperative Management Plan.
2. The Bodie Bowl ACEC and Bodie Hills Planning Cooperative Management Plan, Bodie State historic Park Management Plan, and supporting BLM planning documents provide direction for pedestrian, bicycle and/or equestrian trails access into Bodie. Existing trails, rather than new trails, are to access the area whenever practical.

VIRGINIA LAKES

1. The Virginia Lakes area is heavily used by seasonal residents and visitors. A number of trails and roads exist in the area. Pedestrian and bike facilities should be considered during any roadway improvements in the area.

MONO BASIN

1. The Mono Basin is a heavily used recreational destination. A number of existing trails and roads lie within the boundaries of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area. The Scenic Area's Comprehensive Management Plan governs use of those facilities.
2. The Mono Basin has two communities: Lee Vining and Mono City. Pedestrian facilities in Lee Vining could be improved by streetscape improvements along US 395 right of way and by the provision of additional parking. The Mono Yosemite Trail Plan also identifies opportunity to connect Mono City to Lee Vining with trail access.
3. Opportunity exists to extend the Lee Vining Creek trail up Lee Vining Canyon to the campgrounds and other locations as specified in the Mono Yosemite Trail Plan.
4. Access for pedestrians and equestrians along the west side of Mono Lake is limited to the shoulder of US 395 or to trails on the steep hillside to the west. Residents have expressed concern that access be improved along this portion of the highway.

JUNE LAKE LOOP

1. The June Lake Loop is a heavily visited recreational destination that experiences occasional traffic congestion. The Village area, in particular, lacks adequate parking and pedestrian facilities.
2. The June Lake Area Plan, part of the county General Plan, contains policies that stress the need to develop a trail system linking commercial, residential, recreational, and parking nodes. This trail system should be designed and implemented to provide year-round recreational and commuting opportunities consistent with the June Lake Loop Trail Plan/Map.
3. The June Lake Loop Trail Plan/Map recognizes potential exists to develop trails to the Village and to surrounding recreational areas within the June Lake Loop.
4. Northshore Drive and the Rodeo Grounds/West Village area provide opportunity for trails to access the June Lake ball field, the June Mountain Ski Area, and Gull and June lakes.
5. The June Lake Trail Committee meets regularly, conducts fundraising, sponsors an annual Trails Day, and oversees implementation and updates of the Trail Plan.

MAMMOTH VICINITY/UPPER OWENS

1. Recreation is the principal use of this area; much of it occurs on the extensive road system in the area and on marked Nordic ski trails and snowmobile trails. The USFS and BLM resource management plans and other planning documents address management of these facilities.
2. Pedestrian use of Substation Road is extensive and occurs on a year-round basis. On much of the road, shoulders are not adequate to allow pedestrians to get off the roadway. People walking on the road, or in the surrounding hills, park off the road in several areas. There is potential to develop a parking area, picnic area, visitor kiosk, and interpretive site in the vicinity. Interpretive facilities/trail related to the Casa Diablo resource area is anticipated and would contribute to the Highway 395 Scenic Byway corridor.

3. The Town of Mammoth Lakes has a planned trail system within the town's boundaries. Connecting this trail system to trails in the surrounding unincorporated area would create additional opportunities for users of the Town's system. The Whitmore Track area is used as a staging and training area for high- altitude long-distance running.

LONG VALLEY

1. Crowley Lake Drive provides access to several recreational areas in nearby Sierra Nevada canyons and is also a popular recreational route itself. Pedestrians and bicyclists use it for local rides or as a portion of longer tours. Pedestrian safety is a concern of local residents, particularly along Crowley Lake Drive and South Landing Road.
2. Benton Crossing Road is popular for pedestrian use as well as bicycling. Shoulders on the road have been improved for bicycling and running use.
3. Concepts have been discussed to develop a hiking, cycling, and equestrian trail around Crowley Lake if demand warranted such a trail. Various roads and trails, which could be linked to provide access, now exist most of the way around the lake. Since the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power owns much of the land around the lake, a trail system would require its cooperation.
4. Opportunities exist for other regional trails in the long valley area, including a trail connecting the Mammoth area with Long Valley via use of existing roads. Better signage and completion of a small portion of trail near Tobacco Flat would be necessary. Currently, an unofficial parking area exists at the northern end of Crowley Lake Drive and US 395. This area could be improved to provide better access for all trail users.
5. Additional trails between Long Valley and Tri-Valley provide access along Benton Crossing Road to the glass Mountains, Casa Diablo hills, volcanic tablelands, and the Owens Gorge.

WHEELER CREST/PARADISE

1. Wheeler Crest/Paradise is a residential area with limited demand for pedestrian or equestrian trails. Residents currently use the existing road system and surrounding public lands for a variety of trail and recreational activities. Lower Rock Creek Trail and Lower Rock Creek Road are a recreational destination for visitors and bicyclists.

TRI-VALLEY

1. The Tri-Valley area includes three residential communities with limited commercial facilities that receive limited recreational use. Demand for pedestrian or equestrian facilities is growing.
2. US Highway 6 (US 6) through the region lacks turnouts or rest-area facilities for sightseers. Paved turnouts with interpretive signing would enhance travelers' enjoyment of the road.

OASIS

1. Oasis is an isolated agricultural area with little recreational use and limited demand for trails.

V. POLICIES

The following section contains new policies as well as pertinent policies from the Circulation Element of the General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

GOALS

- A. Develop a cohesive regional and community trail system that provides access to all communities and to major recreational areas.

B. Work with communities in order to gain consensus on current and future trail improvements and priorities.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Policy 1. Where possible, utilize existing roads and trails to develop the trail system in Mono County.

Policy 2. Work with appropriate agencies to develop trails and associated facilities that connect to existing trail systems.

Policy 3. When possible, plan and develop trails as multi-use year-round facilities.

Policy 4. Concentrate developed trails and facilities in the most heavily used areas such as in and around communities.

Policy 5. Development of trails on County roads and private property should be consistent with goals and policies for trails development and recreational use on adjacent public lands.

Policy 5a. Encourage agencies to manage OHV use on public lands to minimize user conflicts.

Policy 6. Provide input to federal and state agencies on the development of trail systems on public lands, particularly in areas adjacent to communities.

Policy 7. Design trails to limit impacts to sensitive plant communities including wetland and riparian corridors.

Policy 8. Incorporate signage into trail design to encourage compliance with trails rules and etiquette.

COMMUNITY TRAILS

Policy 9. Utilize community trails to connect commercial, employment centers, community facilities, recreational, and residential areas in communities, and to link communities to surrounding trail systems and recreational areas.

Policy 10. Community trails should include way-finding and informational signage to facilitate their use.

Policy 11. Where feasible, and where demand warrants, design and construct community trails as multi-use facilities and as year-round trails.

Policy 12. Seek funding for the development and maintenance of community trails.

Policy 13. Work with subdividers to provide connecting paths to existing local and/or community, educational, and recreational facilities.

Policy 14. Work with community groups to refine and implement the conceptual trail schemes presented in this Plan and supporting documents.

Policy 15. Promote healthy lifestyles by integrating trails into communities. At the community level, connect neighborhoods, community facilities, and main streets via trail systems. At the regional level, connect communities to scenic resources, appropriate historical/cultural places, and recreation opportunities, as well as to other communities.

Policy 16. Reference and update existing community trail documents in establishing trail priorities.

Policy 17. Investigate the feasibility of improving connections of the regional OHV network with supportive communities, such as combined use designations for County roads in northern Mono County.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Policy 18. Trails shall be developed and maintained in conformance with the USFS's Standard Trails Plans and Specifications.

Policy 19. Trails shall be designed for accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Building Code.

Policy 20. Work with communities, Caltrans, USFS, BLM, and other agencies to develop and implement a standardized way-finding program.

Policy 21. Pursue common standards for the region, particularly in the design of signage and wayfinding, marketing, and information systems such as data sets and maps.

Policy 22. Trailside facilities shall be designed and constructed to blend with the surrounding natural environment and be designed for low maintenance.

Policy 23. Parking facilities shall be sited, designed and constructed to minimize potential visual and water quality/drainage impacts.

TRAIL-SIDE FACILITIES

Policy 24. Trail-side facilities should be developed in the most-heavily-used areas, particularly on community trails.

Policy 25. Trail-side facilities should provide the following amenities, as appropriate and financially feasible:

- Rest areas, including restrooms and drinking water;
- Picnic areas;
- Parking areas and where appropriate, adequate facilities for horseback riders; and
- Interpretive signs/kiosks.

Policy 26. When planning trail-side facilities, particularly in community areas, consideration should be given to what other facilities are available in the area in order to avoid duplication of services and to provide the most-complete array of facilities.

Policy 27. In accordance with applicable laws, trail-side facilities shall be designed for persons with disabilities.

Policy 28. The need for pedestrian amenities along sidewalks, such as improved lighting, landscaping, paving, street furnishings (benches, drinking fountains, trash receptacles), winter maintenance requirements, improved street crossings, and improved access to parking areas should be evaluated when designing improvements to sidewalk systems.

Policy 29. Seek funding to develop additional trail-side facilities and amenities (such as information kiosks) along regional and community trails.

Policy 30. Work with community groups, special districts, and businesses to sponsor development and maintenance of trail-side facilities in community areas.

TRAILS FUNDING

Policy 31. Fiscal analyses for proposed trails development projects should consider both construction and maintenance costs.

Policy 32. Funding efforts should focus on developing community trails and associated facilities. Within communities, focus funding efforts on proposed trails where demand is highest.

Policy 33. Countywide priorities for trails development should be established in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Mono County.

Policy 34. Develop a strategic plan in consultation with federal, state, and local agencies for coordinating and applying for trails funding.

Policy 35. The County shall include applicable trails development projects identified in this Plan in its CIP once funding has been secured.

Policy 36. Revise funding priorities periodically to reflect changes in funding availability and local and regional needs.

Policy 37. Consider developing and implementing a sponsorship program where local businesses and community groups contribute to the construction and maintenance of trail-side facilities with community areas (e.g., similar to Caltrans Adopt-a-Highway or TOML Adopt-a-Trail).

Policy 38. Format and adjust planning documents/processes to qualify for new funding opportunities, such as the Active Transportation Program (ATP).

Policy 39. Pursue sustainable financial resources for trails development and maintenance. Support citizen stewardship and partnerships, and leverage the capacities of non-profits to assist in all aspects.

COOPERATIVE TRAILS DEVELOPMENT

Policy 40. Use partnerships in the planning, design, development, construction and maintenance of sustainable regional and community trail systems for all users.

Policy 41. Utilize established community-based and interagency planning forums/systems, such as RPACs, JLCAC, and the CPT to secure citizen and agency/entity involvement throughout the trail planning and development process.

Policy 42. Work with community groups and/or non-profits on the development and maintenance of trails and associated facilities.

Policy 43. Work with appropriate agencies and organizations to obtain funding for trails development.

Policy 44. Establish common standards for the region, particularly in the design of signage and wayfinding, marketing, and information systems such as data sets and maps.

Policy 45. Facilitate collaboration with agencies/entities in the funding, environmental review, planning and development of trails in communities and throughout the region. Collaborating entities should include Mono County, Mono County LTC, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, USFS (Humboldt-Toiyabe and Inyo), BLM, National Park Service, State Parks, Caltrans, LADWP, Walker River Irrigation District, Cal Fire, local fire protection districts, tribal entities, non-profits such as Friends of the Inyo, Mammoth Lakes Recreation, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access, and Eastern Sierra Land Trust, and willing private partners, including ranchers.

Policy 46. Integrate trail opportunities into regional initiatives, such as watershed assessments, scenic byway programs, and corridor planning.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Community priorities focus on those projects with the highest need.

Antelope Valley

Priority 1. Enhance pedestrian facilities along US 395 in Walker consistent with the Design Guidelines and Character Inventory study.

Priority 2. Work with the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) to provide recreational facilities at Topaz Lake, including a hiking trail around the lake and interpretive facilities.

Priority 3. Work with WRID and local landowners to develop public access trails to the West Walker River, along with parking facilities, and informational signing.

Bridgeport Valley

Priority 1. Increase pedestrian safety from Evans Tract to town and along SR 182 from the reservoir to town.

Priority 2. Work with public land managers to create a multi-use, year-round trails system for pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians in the summer, and nordic activities in the winter. Explore a potential trail connection between Timber Harvest Road and town.

Priority 3. Explore Off-Highway Vehicle recreation opportunities, such as combined use roads, while remaining sensitive to resource impacts and public concerns.

Bodie

Priority 1. Provide alternate access into Bodie with trails. Promote the use of unique and historical compatible modes of travel to Bodie, such as rail, horse-drawn wagons and carriages, and equestrian.

Priority 2. Support preservation of the old railroad grade from Mono Mills to Bodie. Highlight and interpret the old railroad grade as a trail route to Bodie.

Priority 3. Provide for wagons and similar historically compatible travel modes to Bodie through concession agreements and designation of routes.

Priority 4. Inventory existing trails in the Bodie Hills. Request State Parks to inventory trails with the Historic Park.

Priority 5. Prioritize trail development / improvement projects in this plan to expedite applications for grant funding.

Priority 6. Coordinate trail development with other modes of travel: provide trail linkages to the visitor center, parking areas, transit hubs and recreation nodes.

Priority 7. Consider winter use for appropriate trails. Designate applicable trails available for Nordic ski, snowshoe and snowmobile use.

Virginia Lakes

Priority 1. Any roadway improvements should include shoulder improvements for pedestrian use.

Priority 2. Encourage and work with appropriate agencies to maintain Sno-Park site just west of US 395 on Virginia Lakes Road.

Mono Basin

Priority 1. Work with community groups to improve the sidewalk system along Main Street (US 395) in Lee Vining.

Priority 2. Work with the USFS, community groups, and landowners to implement an extension of the community trail up Lee Vining Canyon and to provide interpretive signage along the trail per the Mono Yosemite Trail Plan.

Priority 3. Work with Caltrans to improve safety for sightseers, pedestrians, and bicyclists on US 395 along the west side of Mono Lake.

Priority 4. Investigate potential alignments for trail connections between Mono City and Lee Vining.

June Lake Loop

Priority 1. Continue to work with the June Lake Trails committee to implement the objectives of the June Lake Loop Trail Plan/Map.

Priority 2. Work with the USFS and private landowners to develop a trail connection between the June Lake Village and the Down Canyon area.

Priority 3. Work with Caltrans to enhance public safety by optimizing conditions for road bike and pedestrian users on SR 158. Identify areas for potential crossings/traffic calming solutions.

Priority 4. Maximize trail connections between existing establishments such as Gull Lake - June Lake, campgrounds – village, commercial areas and future developments (see Design Guideline and Character Inventory Study).

Priority 5. Identify missing links between existing trails for continued connectivity throughout the loop.

Priority 6. Implement a signage and way-finding program to better identify existing trails.

Mammoth Vicinity/Upper Owens

Priority 1. Improve Substation Road area for pedestrian use.

Priority 2. Link the Town's trail system to the surrounding unincorporated area, particularly on Sherwin Creek Road and the Scenic Loop Road.

Priority 3. Pursue an interpretive site and supporting facilities in the Substation Road vicinity such as a Geothermal Interpretive Trail.

Long Valley

Priority 1. Identify, formalize and utilize existing trails and pathways for connectivity within and between communities.

Priority 2. Support efforts to connect Lower Rock Creek Road so that it does not intersect with US 395 south of Tom's Place but terminates at Crowley Lake Drive south of Tom's Place.

Priority 3. Complete segment of regional trail (at Tobacco Flat) from the Mammoth Vicinity to Long Valley.

Priority 4. Study the feasibility of developing hiking, biking, and equestrian trails around Crowley Lake.

Policy 5. Explore inexpensive and low-maintenance traffic-calming strategies such as driver feedback signs and striping for bike/pedestrian lanes on County roads.

Wheeler Crest/Paradise

Priority 1. Continue current efforts to provide additional pedestrian facilities along Lower Creek Road.

Tri-Valley

Priority 1. Work with Caltrans to provide improved crossing safety on US 6 between West Chalfant and the community center.

VI. REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY ROUTES

Route selection was based on the policies in this chapter, on information in the Issues, Opportunities, and Constraints section of this chapter, as well as maps and data contained in the county General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan, and the planning documents of other resource management agencies.

Regional routes link communities, provide region-wide recreation opportunities, showcase the history and scenic beauty of the Eastern Sierra, promote tourism and economic development, and enrich quality of life. Regional routes are conceptual and explained further in the Eastern Sierra Regional Trails Plan.

Community routes are generally appropriate for pedestrian use, and in some cases, biking. Community routes are not depicted on maps, nor do they have route numbers, since these routes are primarily conceptual.

EASTERN SIERRA REGIONAL TRAIL (ESRT)

The concept of an ESRT would establish a trans-county trail that begins at Topaz Lake in the north and runs to Round Valley in the south, providing nearly 350 miles of trail. For more information contact the Community Development Department.

COMMUNITY ROUTES**Antelope Valley**

- **Topaz Lake recreational facilities:** Hiking trail around the lake. Recreational facilities accessible from US 395 along the south or west shore of the lake. Interpretive facilities along the trail and the recreational site. Depends on negotiations with Walker River Irrigation District (WRID), the BLM, and private landowners.
- **Pedestrian path along US 395 in Walker:** From Eastside Lane to west end of town. Linked to bike routes planned on US 395 and Larson Lane.
- **Public access trails to the West Walker River:** Seek public input on any possible locations of trails and parking facilities. Feasibility will depend on negotiations and input with landowners and the WRID. Work with the community and adjacent landowners to determine appropriate uses on the County FEMA parcels within the Valley.

Bridgeport Valley

- **Pedestrian paths to town:** State Route 182 from reservoir to town and US 395 from Evans Tract to town.
- **Signed Nordic ski trail on Timber Harvest Road:** Linked to development of Timber Harvest Road as a pedestrian, bike, and/or equestrian route.

Mono Basin

- **Sidewalk and streetscape improvements in Lee Vining:** Pursue grant funding for a community Main Street planning effort to address detailed plans for sidewalk and streetscape improvements.

- **Lee Vining Trail extensions:** From the south end of the Lee Vining Creek community trail up Lee Vining Creek to the campgrounds in Lee Vining Canyon.
- **Trail from Mono City to Lee Vining:** Investigate alignments.

June Lake Loop

- **Streetscape improvements in the June Lake Village:** Along SR 158 starting at the June Lake campground to Gull Lake Road.
- **Gull Lake Trail extensions:** Extension of the fisherman trail on the southwest side of Gull Lake around the north and south shores of the lake to connect with the June Lake Village and Gull Lake Park (nearly completed). Spur trail along the north shore of Gull Lake connecting Gull Lake Park and the June Lake ball field.
- **June Lake Trail extensions:** Trail segments consistent with the June Lake Trails Plan.
- **June Lake Village paths:** Use of existing vehicular travel ways for pedestrian paths consistent with the Design Guidelines and Character Inventory study.

Mammoth Vicinity/Upper Owens

- **Sherwin Creek and Scenic Loop linkages to Town trails:** Extension of these trail designations from the Town boundaries to US 395.
- **Substation Road pedestrian access:** Geothermal interpretive trail and supporting facilities.

Long Valley

- **South Landing Road pedestrian access:** Safe routes to school pedestrian crossing at community center.
- **Crowley Lake Drive pedestrian access:** Shoulder improvements from Tom's Place to the northern junction of US 395.
- **Mammoth Vicinity to Long Valley:** Complete segments (at Tobacco Flat) from Mammoth Vicinity to Long Valley.
- **Crowley Lake Trail:** Multi-use trail circumnavigating Crowley Lake. Access points at South Landing, Layton Springs, and North Landing. Depends on negotiations with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.
- **School Trail:** From South Landing Road and Crowley Lake Drive to school site.

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
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Bridgeport, CA 93517
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Staff Report

TO: Mono County Local Transportation Commission
DATE: March 10, 2025
FROM: Aaron M. Washco, Planning Analyst
SUBJECT: Appointment of Social Services Transportation Advisory Council member

RECOMMENDATIONS

Appoint the following member to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC):

Hunter Harvath, Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra 2026

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: None. Administration of the SSTAC and unmet transit needs process are funded by the Local Transportation Fund and 2024-25 Overall Work Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE: N/A

RTP / RTIP CONSISTENCY

The Mono County Local Transportation Commission (LTC) is required to receive input from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to fulfill tasks related to the unmet needs hearing process, and SSTAC input is required to fulfill the Citizen Participation Process defined by Public Utilities Code §99238.5.

DISCUSSION

Members of the SSTAC are appointed by the LTC. The appointees are recruited from a broad representation of social services and transit providers representing the elderly, disabled, and persons of limited means. In appointing members, the LTC shall strive to attain geographic and minority representation among council members. The membership term is three years and terms are staggered so that roughly one-third of the memberships are up for renewal or reappointment each year. The membership requirements mandated by Public Utilities Code §99238 is provided in Attachment 1. The current list of 2025-26 SSTAC members is provided in Attachment 2, and a proposed final 2025-26 SSTAC roster is included in Attachment 3.

At the February 10, 2025 LTC meeting, the Commission reappointed three members of the SSTAC, and appointed a fourth. Since that meeting, it has come to the attention to staff that another member, Mary Toomey, has left her role with Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra (DSES). Upon learning of Mary’s departure, staff reached out to DSES seeking a nomination to replace Mary on the SSTAC. DSES has nominated Hunter Harvath to fill the vacancy. To maintain staggered terms, Hunter’s term will expire in 2026 as Mary’s would have. He will be eligible to be reappointed for an additional three-year term next year.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Public Utilities Code §99238: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council
- 2. SSTAC Roster (2024-25)
- 3. Proposed SSTAC Roster (2025-26)

Attachment #1**SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL §99238**

Each transportation planning agency shall provide for the establishment of a social services transportation advisory council for each county, or counties operating under a joint powers agreement, which is not subject to the apportionment restriction established in Section 99232.

(a) The social services transportation advisory council shall consist of the following members:

- (1) One representative of potential transit users who is 60 years of age or older.
- (2) One representative of potential transit users who is handicapped.
- (3) Two representatives of the local social services providers for seniors, including one representative of a social services transportation provider, if one exists.
- (4) Two representatives of local social services providers for the handicapped, including one representative of a social services transportation provider, if one exists.
- (5) One representative of a local social services provider for persons of limited means.
- (6) Two representatives from the local consolidated transportation services agency, designated pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 15975 of the Government Code, if one exists, including one representative from an operator, if one exists.
- (7) The transportation-planning agency may appoint additional members in accordance with the procedure prescribed in subdivision (b).

(b) Members of the social services transportation advisory council shall be appointed by the transportation planning agency, which shall recruit candidates for appointment from a broad representation of social services and transit providers representing the elderly, the handicapped, and persons of limited means. In appointing council members, the transportation-planning agency shall strive to attain geographic and minority representation among council members. Of the initial appointments to the council, one-third of them shall be for a one-year term, one-third shall be for a two-year term, and one-third shall be for a three-year term. Subsequent to the initial appointment, the term of appointment shall be for three years, which may be renewed for an additional three-year term. The transportation planning agency may, at its discretion, delegate its responsibilities for appointment pursuant to this subdivision to the board of supervisors.

(c) The social services transportation advisory council shall have the following responsibilities:

- (1) Annually participate in the identification of transit needs in the jurisdiction, including unmet transit needs that may exist within the jurisdiction of the council and that may be reasonable to meet by establishing or contracting for new public transportation or specialized transportation services or by expanding existing services.
- (2) Annually review and recommend action by the transportation-planning agency for the area within the jurisdiction of the council, which finds, by resolution, that (A) there are no unmet transit needs, (B) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet, or (C) there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet.
- (3) Advise the transportation-planning agency on any other major transit issues, including the coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services.

(d) It is the intent of the Legislature that duplicative advisory councils shall not be established where transit advisory councils currently exist and that those existing advisory councils shall, instead, become part of the social services transportation advisory council and shall assume any new responsibilities pursuant to this section.

Attachment #2
Current 2025-2026 Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Roster

Name	Term Expiration
Bri Chappell-McGovern, Emergency Preparedness Facilitator, Mono County Public Health	2026
Mary Toomey, Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra	2026
Tania Ramos, disabled representative (via IMAH)	2026
Eric Clark, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area Transportation Designee	2027
Jenny Park, Liaison to Kern Regional Center, and Director of Operations Inyo-Mono Association for the Handicapped, Inc.	2027
Kelly Barceloux, Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action	2027
Krista Cooper, Mono County Social Services	2027
Molly DesBaillets, Mono County First 5	2028
Dawn Vidal, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Designee, CTSA	2028
Phil Moores, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Executive Director, CTSA	2028
Rick Franz, Caltrans District 9, disabled representative	2028

Attachment #3**Proposed 2025-2026 Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Roster**

Name	Term Expiration
Bri Chappell-McGovern, Emergency Preparedness Facilitator, Mono County Public Health	2026
Hunter Harvath, Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra	2026
Tania Ramos, disabled representative (via IMAH)	2026
Eric Clark, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area Transportation Designee	2027
Jenny Park, Liaison to Kern Regional Center, and Director of Operations Inyo-Mono Association for the Handicapped, Inc.	2027
Kelly Barceloux, Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action	2027
Krista Cooper, Mono County Social Services	2027
Molly DesBaillets, Mono County First 5	2028
Dawn Vidal, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Designee, CTSA	2028
Phil Moores, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Executive Director, CTSA	2028
Rick Franz, Caltrans District 9, disabled representative	2028

**TRAVEL**

This tiny mountain town is proof that free transit works in California

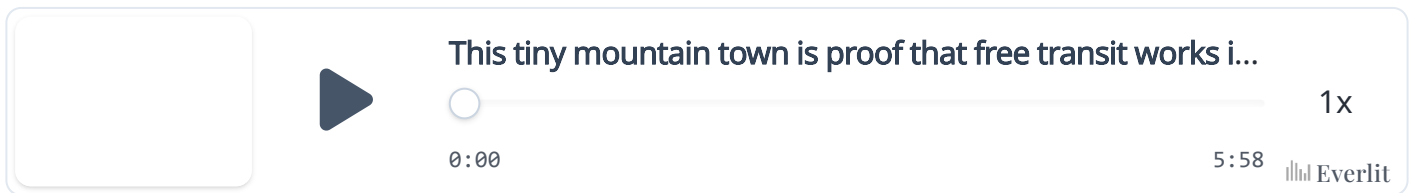


FILE: A bus and cars drive past snowbanks as snow continues to fall in the Sierra Nevada on March 11, 2023, in Mammoth Lakes, Calif.
Mario Tama/Getty Images

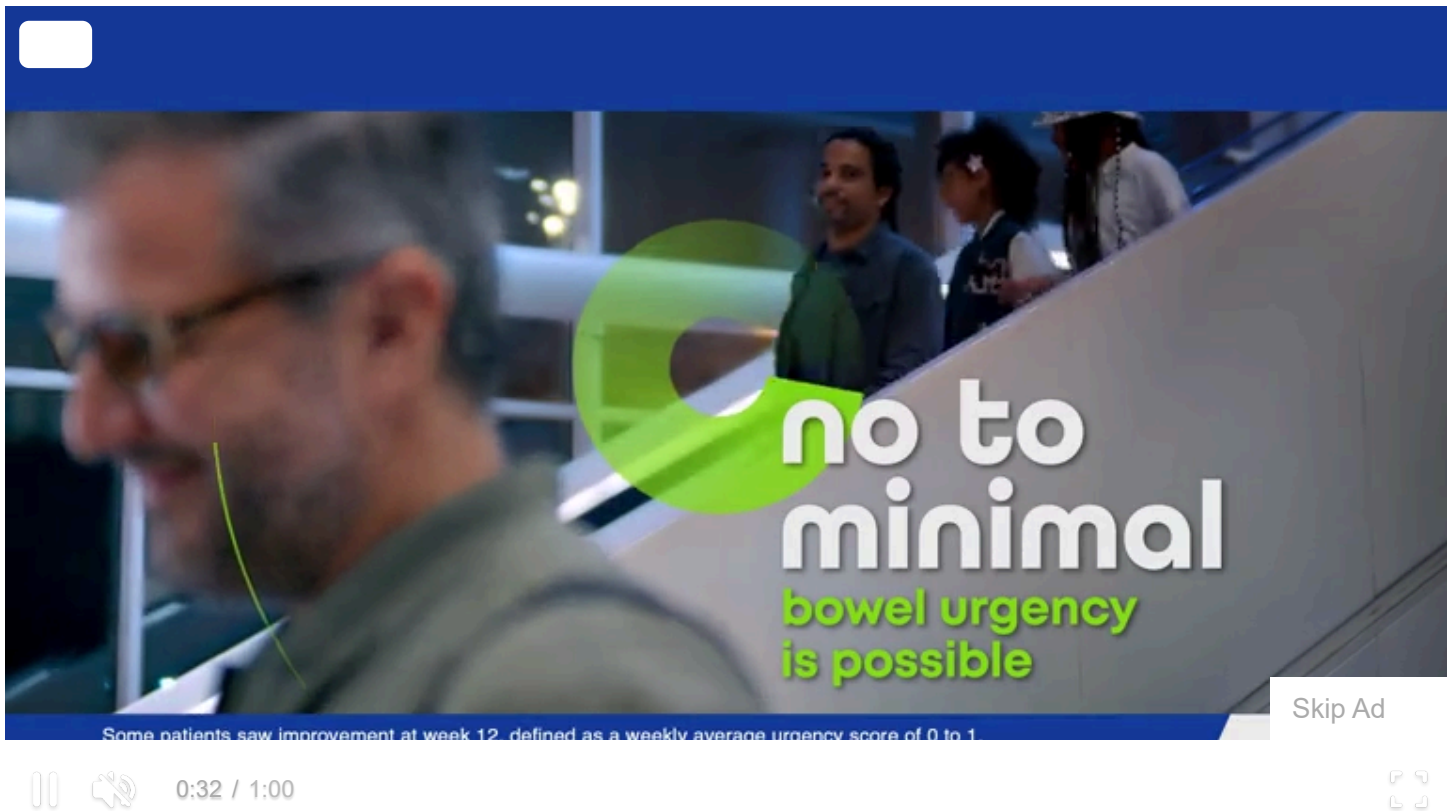
By **Lester Black**, *Cannabis editor*

Feb 19, 2025





Mike Mollgaard had a problem. The 62-year-old retiree needed to repair his car, yet the closest auto body shop was in Bishop, more than 40 miles from his home in Mammoth Lakes. The solution came in a surprising form for a deeply rural community like the Eastern Sierra: his local bus system.



Mollgaard dropped his car off in Bishop and then, for \$7, rode a bus 40 miles to and from his home, thanks to the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority. The rural transit agency offers regular rides to Nevada or Los Angeles, stretching over 400 miles across the state. It's likely the longest service area for local transit in California.

"I think it's great that somebody can get to Reno or Lancaster from here on public transit. I think that's incredible since we don't have a Greyhound here," Mollgaard said. "I think ESTA is a good service, and even though I have a car and use it quite a bit, I still value the bus system."

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It's rare to hear Americans rave about public transit, but ESTA is an anomaly in more ways than one. It has one of the largest coverage areas of any local transit agency in the state, with rides stretching from Reno to the north to Los Angeles County to the south. And while other California transit agencies face financial headwinds or are increasing how much they charge riders, ESTA provides free transit in Mammoth Lakes. During the winter ski season, 100,000 riders a month take the buses.



FILE: A man and a woman riding the Mammoth Lakes shuttle in 2022 with mountains and pine trees in the background.

Layland Masuda/Getty Images

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the least populated counties in the state, with less than 35,000 residents between them — and the municipalities of Bishop and Mammoth Lakes. The agency runs eight bus lines within the town of Mammoth Lakes, all of which are free to use thanks in part to local tax dollars from the town and funding from the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, which contracts with ESTA to provide regular bus service to the mountain.

These Mammoth Mountain bus routes have become indispensable to the town and its world-famous ski area, according to Chris Bubser, mayor of Mammoth Lakes and a member of ESTA's board. The Mammoth Mountain Ski Area receives 1.3 million visitors a year, and the town would plunge into a dangerous and snowy gridlock if the bus routes stopped running, according to Bubser.

“It moves people around in a way that is essential to the functioning of our town. We just couldn’t do it without it,” Bubser said.

Bill Cockroft, a senior vice president at the ski area, agreed that it would be “impossible” to run the mountain without the help of the free buses. Cockroft, who has worked at the mountain since 1969, was involved in the creation of ESTA back in the mid-2000s. The ski area was running its own buses around town, but it was starting to realize that it would be better if a separate agency took up the routes.



FILE: A group waits at a Mammoth Lakes bus stop as a blizzard hits the Eastern Sierra Nevada of California, on March 2, 2024.

DAVID SWANSON/AFP via Getty Images

“The ski area shouldn’t be in the transportation business. We were only doing it because no one was here and we just wanted to get our skiers to the mountain,” Cockroft said.

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Mammoth isn't the only ski area with a free transit system. Other major resorts like Vail and Steamboat Springs in Colorado and Park City in Utah have similarly extensive and free bus systems to get skiers to the ski lifts. Lake Tahoe's resorts also have free shuttle systems, but ESTA's service dwarfs those other transit lines. According to the Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Plan, free shuttles provided 2,977 rides to Palisades during November and December of this ski season; ESTA moved 92,000 people to Mammoth Mountain in December alone.

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Despite offering thousands of rides a week, Mammoth's free buses have not ended traffic at the mountain. Lodge parking lots are still filled up on busy days, and it can be bumper-to-bumper leaving the mountain. But "back in the day, it was even worse," Cockroft said, with it sometimes taking over an hour to travel just 3 miles from the main lodge to town. Cockroft said the situation is much safer now, especially on

heavy snow days when drivers from sunnier locales like San Diego can take a bus instead of driving up to the mountain.



Bus riders look out the front window at the snow-covered road in Mammoth Lakes, 2024.
Lester Black/SFGATE

“Southern California people are glued to their cars, and then they get up here, and if it’s snowing, they don’t want to chain up and get their cars up [to the ski area],”

Cockroft said.

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ESTA doesn't only provide services for tourists. In December, nearly 1,000 people took its Reno route and over 500 people took its Lancaster route. Bubser, the town's mayor, said even she takes these long routes when she can. Katy Grans Drake, a Mammoth Lakes local, said she's had family fly into Reno to visit her, and they were able to use ESTA's shuttle.

"We just had family visit from Sydney, and they were very impressed with how easy and convenient the bus system was," Drake said by email. "They asked us before the trip if they needed to rent a car, and we said definitely not."

This long stretch of service also makes ESTA's service area one of the longest in the state.



FILE: A group waits at a bus stop for an “out of service” bus to pull up as a blizzard hits Mammoth Lakes in the Eastern Sierra Nevada of California, on March 2, 2024.

DAVID SWANSON/AFP via Getty Images

“I’m not aware of any other transit agency that has 400+ route miles. I can’t say that for a fact — but I have looked and I have not found any,” said Dawn Vidal, ESTA’s transit administration manager, in an email to SFGATE. Luke Bornheimer, a transit advocate based in San Francisco, said he had also not heard of any other transit agency in the state with a longer service area.

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Perhaps even more impressive, ESTA maintains buses on hundreds of miles of Eastern Sierra roadway even during storms. Mollgaard said that even though it was snowing on the day he had to get his car, ESTA still performed its service.

“They said as long as the highway wasn’t shut down by highway patrol they would be running,” Mollgaard said, “which I think is commendable.”

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LTC Co-Executive Director Report

March 10, 2024

Update on Reds Meadow Road Construction

Federal partners and the Town of Mammoth Lakes have been meeting regularly to discuss the progress of the Reds Meadow Road construction project. The Federal partners have decided to provide additional dedicated construction time to the contractor during the summer of 2025. The concessionaires in the Valley have been notified of this decision. A schedule has been posted at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/inyo/alerts-notices/?cid=fseprd1127643>. The Federal partners are taking the reduced schedule into consideration when issuing permits and making reservations. The following information is directly from the USFS website:

The following schedule is subject to change slightly. Please check back frequently while planning your trip. Inyo National Forest will also make an announcement for any schedule changes.

Prior to July 3, 2025, Reds Meadow Road will be open on weekends only (Saturdays and Sundays) once the road conditions and weather permits. The road is currently closed for the winter.

The mandatory ESTA shuttle bus (<https://www.estransit.com/reds-meadow-shuttle>) runs daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., as usual when the road is open. Any other times when the shuttle bus is not running but the road is open means that personal vehicles may enter and exit, provided they meet the restrictions listed above.

- **July 2 at 8:00 p.m. – July 6 at 11:00 p.m.:** Open
- **July 6 – August 28:**
 - Open Thursdays 6 a.m. through Sundays at 11:00 p.m.
 - *Please note:* Thursdays will have 1 hour traffic delays from 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- **August 28 – September 1:**
 - Open Thursday at 8 p.m. through Monday at 11 p.m.
- **September 2 - September 14:**
 - Open Thursdays 8:00 p.m. through Sundays at 11 p.m.
- **September 15 – October 5:**
 - Open Saturday at 7:00 a.m. through Sunday at 11 p.m.
 - Last day for ESTA shuttle bus operations is October 5.
- **October 6 – end of year:**
 - Closed to vehicle and pedestrian traffic for construction and winter season.

Administration

- Development of the FY 25-26 OWP, submitted by March 7 (per Caltrans extension).
- Tracking allocation of the FY 24-25 Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) funding by the California Transportation Commission.

Meetings

- Met with Chair, Caltrans, and staff to review agenda.
- Multiple staff meetings to draft the FY 25-26 OWP.
- Multiple Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation public stakeholder meetings and project management meetings.

Trainings

- None

Programs

- Bi-State Sage Grouse conservation: review of Bi-State Action Plan, coordinated agendaing a presentation to the Mono County Board (on 3/18).
- Projects underway: MJHMP update, Town's safe park facility, County's RVs as residences policy work, tracking and participating in Caltrans main street projects (Bridgeport and Lee Vining).
- Coordinating continued efforts on the Wildlife Crossing project given the departure of Katie (CT staff).
- Reviewed Mono County 5-year Capital Improvement Program for consistency with the RTP.

Grant Tracking

- Developing grant application for June Lake Active Transportation Plan implementation.

Please contact Haislip Hayes for questions about Town of Mammoth Lakes projects at 760-965-3652 or hhayes@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.

For questions about Mono County projects and/or administration, please contact Wendy Sugimura at 760-924-1814 or wsugimura@mono.ca.gov to be directed to the appropriate staff.