Planning and Economic Development Commission Agenda

Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes

Members of the Planning and Economic Development Commission

Chair Michael Vanderhurst, Vice Chair Jennifer Burrows, Commissioner Paul Chang, Commissioner Jessica Kennedy, Commissioner Greg Eckert

NOTE: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Town Clerk at (760) 965-3602. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 13.102-35.104 ADA Title II)

NOTE: Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Town Offices located at 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite 230 during normal business hours. Such documents are also available on the Town of Mammoth Lakes website at www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.

NOTE: You may watch the Planning and Economic Development Commission meetings on the Town of Mammoth Lakes' website at www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov, on the local government cable channel 18, via Zoom or in person. Public comments can be submitted to the Town Clerk at clerk@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov before and during the meeting, via Zoom or in person.

NOTE: All comments will be limited to a speaking time of five minutes.

ZOOM INFORMATION

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device:
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US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 876 9923 or +1 301 715 8592
*Callers - To Raise your hand press *9, To Unmute/Mute press *6*
Webinar ID: 944 6788 4456
International numbers available: https://monocounty.zoom.us/u/aeHBYOcpOu

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Public Comment portion of the agenda provides the public with an opportunity to address the Planning and Economic Development Commission on matters not otherwise listed on the agenda. Under California law the Planning and Economic Development Commission is prohibited from generally discussing or taking action on items not included in the agenda; however, the Commission may briefly respond to comments or questions from members of the public. Therefore, the Commission will listen to all public comment, but will not generally discuss the matter or take action on it. Requests for service from the Town may also be made at the Town offices during regular business hours. Members of the public desiring to speak on a matter appearing on the agenda should ask the Chair for the opportunity to be heard when the item comes up for Commission consideration.

4. PRESENTATION

   4.1 Presentation - CIP and Housing Projects Construction Update

5. BUSINESS MATTERS

   5.1 Consider adopting a resolution recommending that the Town Council accept the Eastern Sierra Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

   5.2 Selection of Planning and Economic Development Commission Officers and Committee Appointments

6. CONSENT AGENDA

   6.1 Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 9, 2023.

7. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Informational reports from Commissioner representatives on committees, commissions, and organizations; general reports on Commission activities. Opportunity to add urgency items pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)2, if necessary; and to remove items from consent for separate discussion.

Design Committee - Paul Chang and Jennifer Burrows

Mobility Committee - Michael Vanderhurst and Jessica Kennedy

8. DIRECTORS REPORT

The Director's Report portion of the agenda provides the Director with an opportunity to address the Planning and Economic Development Commission on Community and Economic Development work items.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning and Economic Development Commission will adjourn to a regular meeting to be held on November 8, 2023.

Planning and Economic Development Commission
Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Presentation - CIP and Housing Projects Construction Update

Commission Meeting Date: 10/11/2023

Prepared by: Nolan Bobroff, Acting Community and Economic Development Director
Haislip Hayes, Public Works Director

Recommended Motion: Receive a presentation from Staff on the Town construction projects (CIP and Housing) that were worked on in Summer 2023

Summary: The Town has had a busy 2023 construction season implementing projects from the Town's CIP and Housing Now! programs, and addressing issues that arose from the 2022/23 winter. The presentation will provide an update on the CIP and Housing construction projects that were worked on in Summer 2023.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
The Town's current CIP program sets out a long-term capital improvement program budget for the Town. The complete CIP document identifies funding sources and capital projects to be funded each year for the next five (5) fiscal years. Major projects included in the FY2023/24 CIP include investments in sidewalks, multi-use paths, street rehabilitation, drainage facilities, general facilities, housing projects, and parks and recreation improvements.

Housing Now! Program
The goal of the Mammoth Lakes' housing program is to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents, with the current focus being on rapidly expanding the availability of affordable workforce housing throughout the community in the near-term (present to end of 2024) to support housing at all economic levels. The Town completed a Community Housing Action Plan in 2017 which set a goal of providing 200 – 300 community housing units within 5 years through a combination of new development, redevelopment, housing programs, and policies. As of October 2023, there are 272 affordable units either under construction, entitled, or recently acquired through a buy-down program.

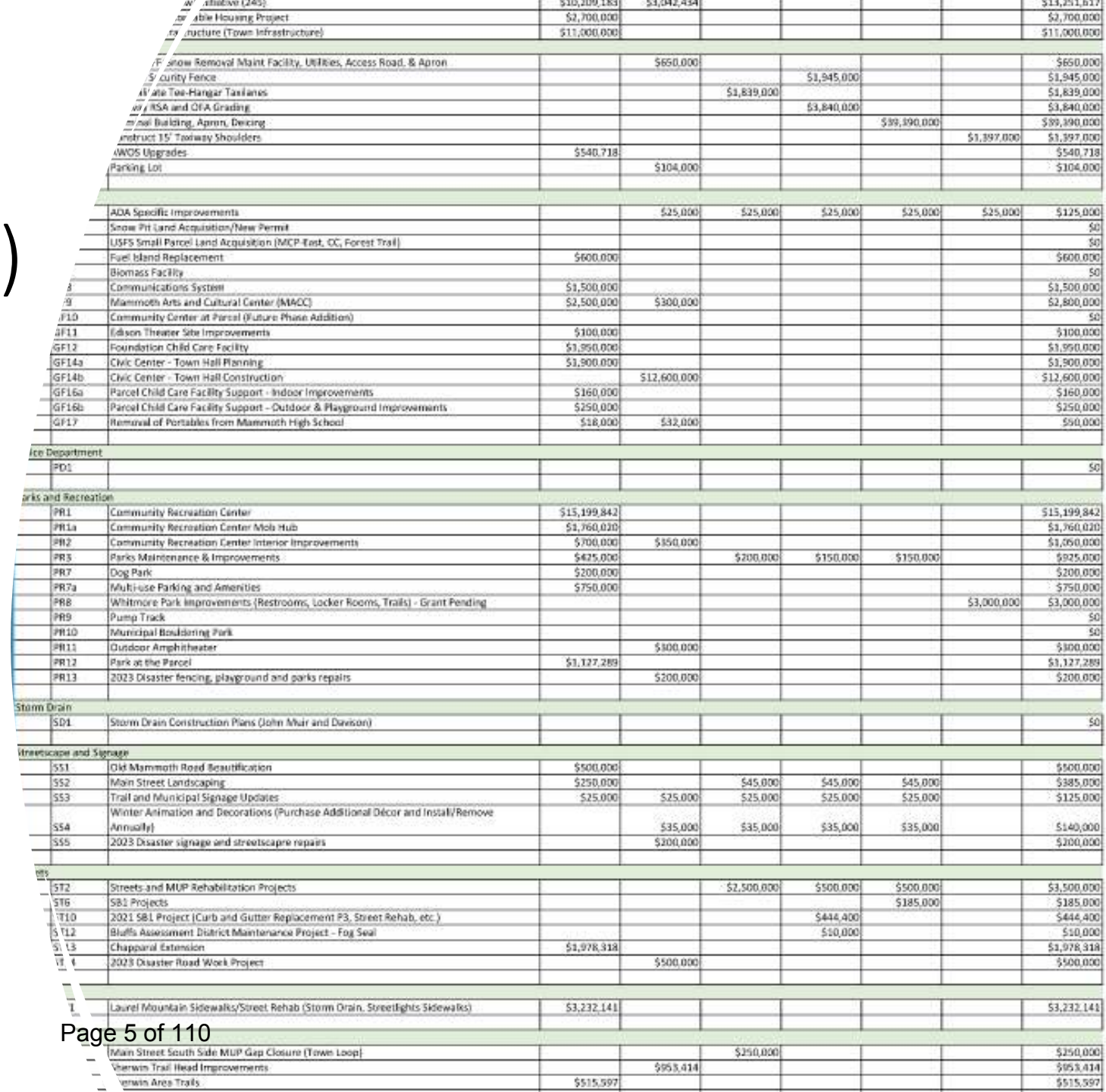
TOML Capital Improvements

Haislip Hayes, PE Public Works Director



TOML Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

- Updated Annually
  - Adopted in July 2023
- 5-year and long-term investment strategies
- $100M+ in investment
  - Does not include Reds or Parcel Grants
- 44 Projects in all categories



		...ble Housing Project	$2,700,000					$2,700,000
		...ructure (Town Infrastructure)	$11,000,000					$11,000,000
		...now Removal Maint Facility, Utilities, Access Road, & Apron		$650,000				$650,000
		...curity Fence				$1,945,000		$1,945,000
		...ate Tee-Hangar Taxilanes			$1,839,000			$1,839,000
		...RSA and OFA Grading				$3,840,000		$3,840,000
		...nal Building, Apron, Deicing					$39,390,000	$39,390,000
		...nstruct 15' Taxiway Shoulders					$1,397,000	$1,397,000
		...WOS Upgrades	$540,718					$540,718
		Parking Lot		$104,000				$104,000
		ADA Specific Improvements		$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$125,000
		Snow Pit Land Acquisition/New Permit							$0
		USFS Small Parcel Land Acquisition (MCP-East, OC, Forest Trail)							$0
		Fuel Island Replacement	$600,000						$600,000
		Biomass Facility							$0
		Communications System	$1,500,000						$1,500,000
		Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center (MACC)	$2,500,000	$300,000					$2,800,000
	F10	Community Center at Parcel (Future Phase Addition)							$0
	GF11	Edison Theater Site Improvements	$100,000						$100,000
	GF12	Foundation Child Care Facility	$1,950,000						$1,950,000
	GF14a	Civic Center - Town Hall Planning	$1,900,000						$1,900,000
	GF14b	Civic Center - Town Hall Construction		$12,600,000					$12,600,000
	GF16a	Parcel Child Care Facility Support - Indoor Improvements	$160,000						$160,000
	GF16b	Parcel Child Care Facility Support - Outdoor & Playground Improvements	$250,000						$250,000
	GF17	Removal of Portables from Mammoth High School	$18,000	$32,000					$50,000
...ice Department									
	PD1								$0
...rks and Recreation									
	PR1	Community Recreation Center	$15,199,842						$15,199,842
	PR1a	Community Recreation Center Mob Hub	$1,760,020						$1,760,020
	PR2	Community Recreation Center Interior Improvements	$700,000	$350,000					$1,050,000
	PR3	Parks Maintenance & Improvements	$425,000		$200,000	$150,000	$150,000		$925,000
	PR7	Dog Park	$200,000						$200,000
	PR7a	Multi-use Parking and Amenities	$750,000						$750,000
	PR8	Whitmore Park Improvements (Restrooms, Locker Rooms, Trails) - Grant Pending						$3,000,000	$3,000,000
	PR9	Pump Track							$0
	PR10	Municipal Bouldering Park							$0
	PR11	Outdoor Amphitheater		$300,000					$300,000
	PR12	Park at the Parcel	$1,127,289						$1,127,289
	PR13	2023 Disaster fencing, playground and parks repairs		$200,000					$200,000
Storm Drain									
	SD1	Storm Drain Construction Plans (John Muir and Davison)							$0
...treetscape and Signage									
	SS1	Old Mammoth Road Beautification	$500,000						$500,000
	SS2	Main Street Landscaping	$250,000		$45,000	$45,000	$45,000		$385,000
	SS3	Trail and Municipal Signage Updates	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000		$125,000
	SS4	Winter Animation and Decorations (Purchase Additional Décor and Install/Remove Annually)		$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000		$140,000
	SS5	2023 Disaster signage and streetscape repairs		$200,000					$200,000
...ets									
	ST2	Streets and MUP Rehabilitation Projects			$2,500,000	$500,000	$500,000		$3,500,000
	ST6	SB1 Projects					$185,000		$185,000
	T10	2021 SB1 Project (Curb and Gutter Replacement P3, Street Rehab, etc.)				$444,400			$444,400
	T12	Bluffs Assessment District Maintenance Project - Fog Seal				$10,000			$10,000
	T3	Chaparral Extension	$1,978,318						$1,978,318
	T 4	2023 Disaster Road Work Project		$500,000					$500,000
	1	Laurel Mountain Sidewalks/Street Rehab (Storm Drain, Streetlights Sidewalks)	$3,232,141						$3,232,141
		Main Street South Side MUP Gap Closure (Town Loop)			$250,000				$250,000
		Sherwin Trail Head Improvements		$953,414					$953,414
		Sherwin Area Trails	$515,597						$515,597











Emergency Work

3 Contracts

- $600k Road repair and pothole
- $400k Sidewalk, drainage & fencing
- $700k Facilities





Signals & Crosswalks

Replaced OMR/Meridian & Canyon LMR
$475K Project

HSIP Grant replace beacons on Main St
$115K Contract Awarded – Start early October

Foundation Childcare

Foundation Childcare

- Repurpose MUSD Portables
  - 5400 SF
  - Could provide care for up to 100 kids
- $1.65M in funding
- Out to bid in November
- Building shell only
- RFP for operator
- Construction 2024





Town Hall & EOC

Target opening 2026
Town Hall, Emergency Operations Center, Town Offices
Corner of Tavern and Sierra Park
$13M Grant pending



MACC

Target 2026
Phase 1 Interior - $1M
Phase 2 New Theater – TOML & Foundation Partnership

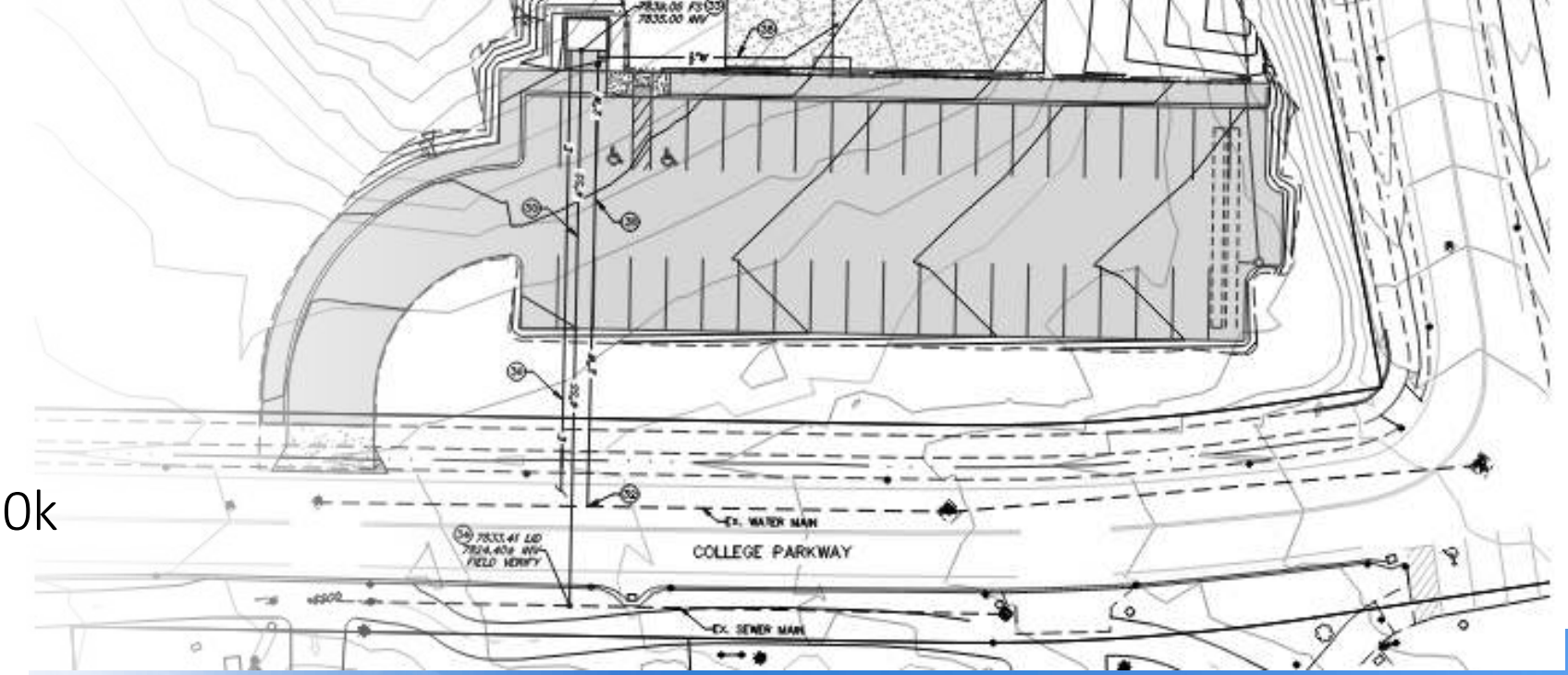


CRC

Substantially complete in October
Soft opening 11/24

Dog Park

- Contract Awarded - $860k
- Parking & Restroom
- Contract for 1 acre fencing, turf, play structures
- Spring 2024

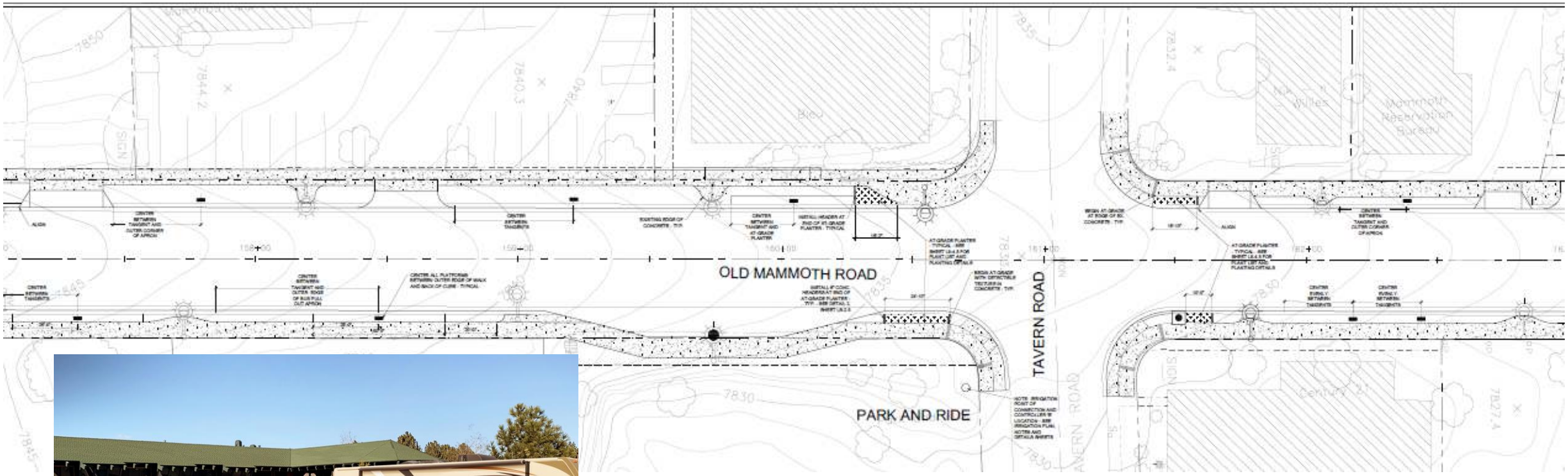






Park at the Parcel

Spring 2024
New playgrounds, restrooms
Supports childcare and residents





OMR & Main Beautification

Bid $750k in work – No Bids
Negotiating with local contractor
Prelim work to occur this fall
Goal to be complete by 7/4/2024
Phase II – additional work on both streetscapes



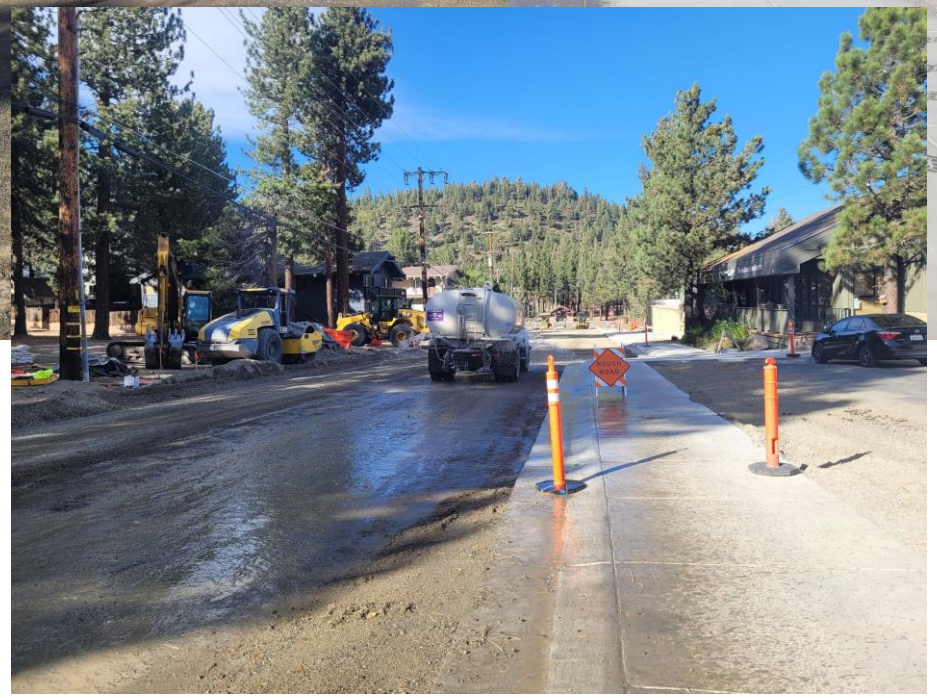




Parcel Roads & Sidewalks

Inyo Street, Chaparral and Tavern Extensions
Plan to complete this fall
SB1 and IIG funded

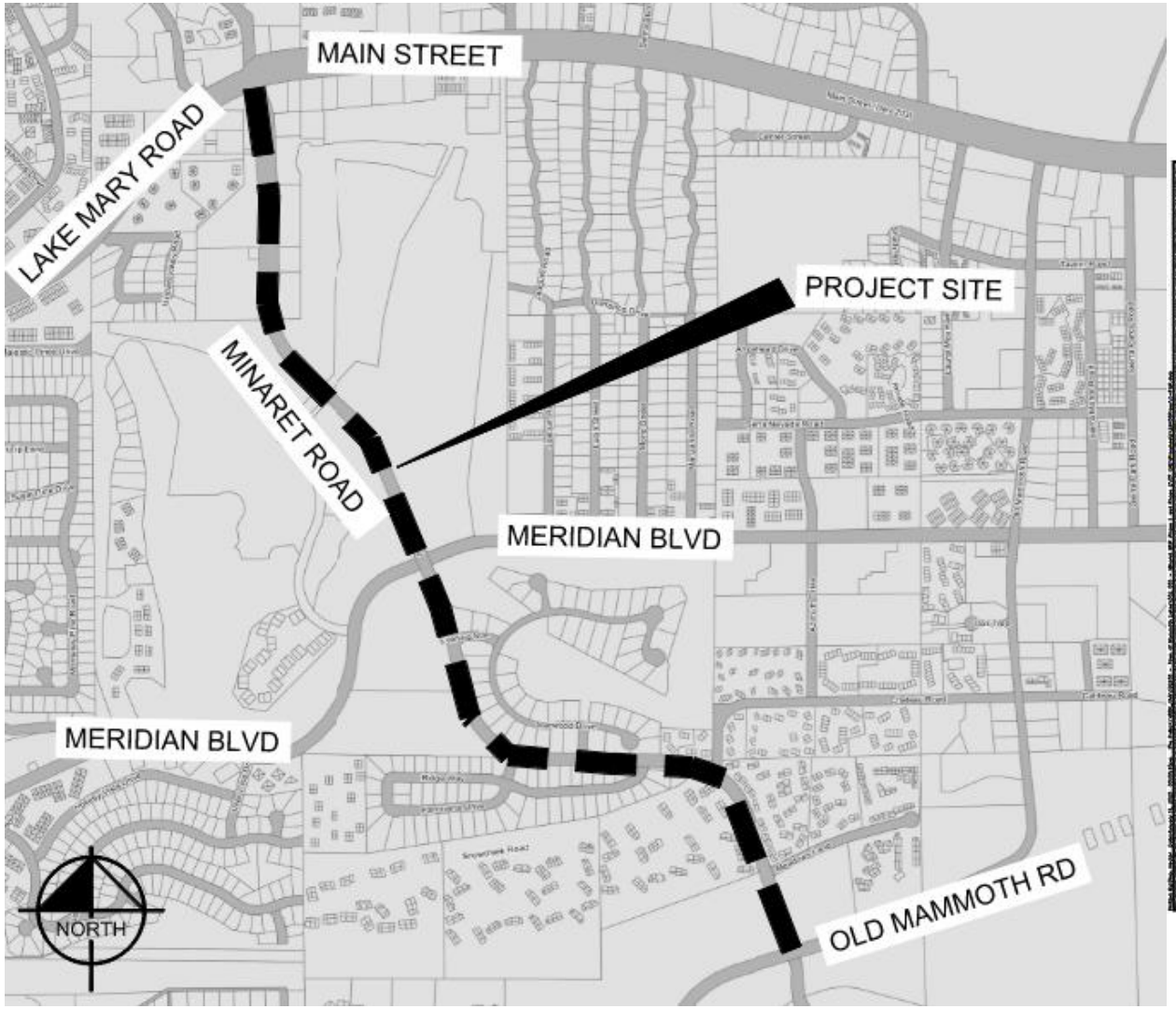


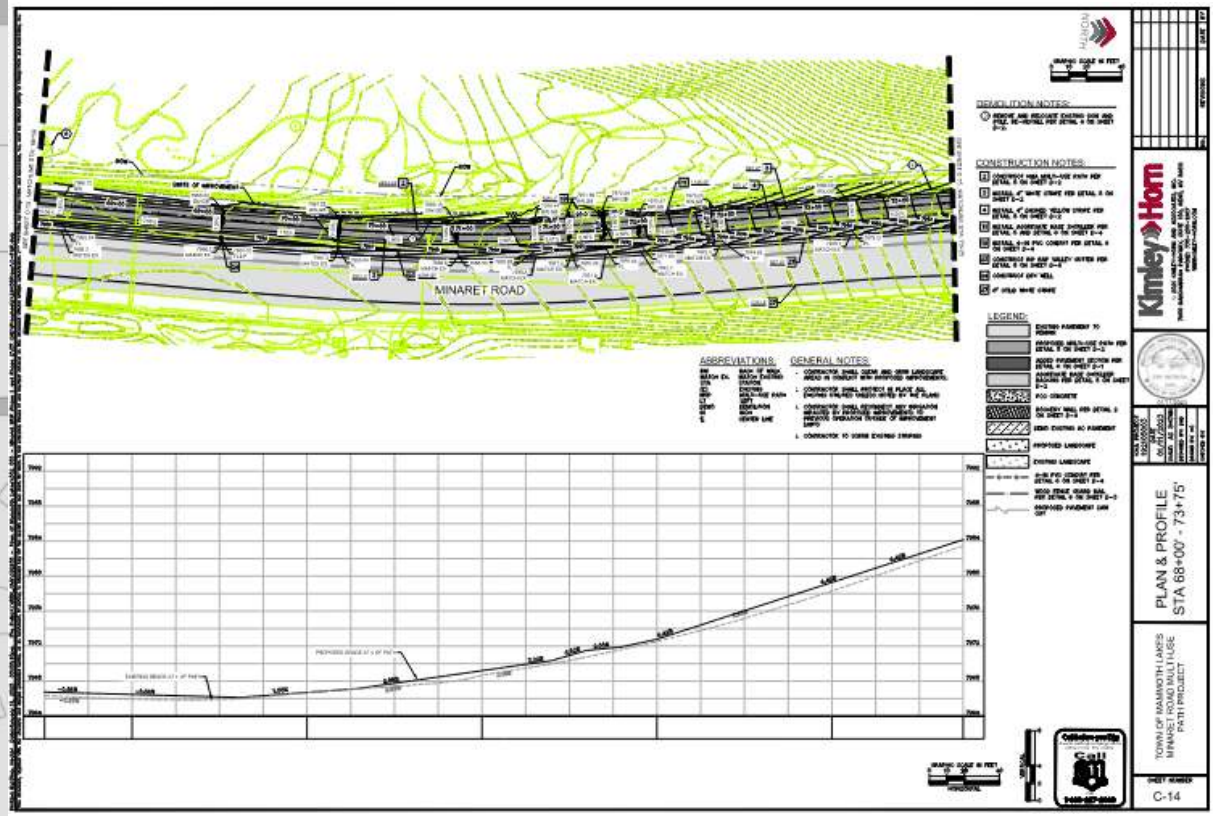




Laurel Mountain Sidewalks

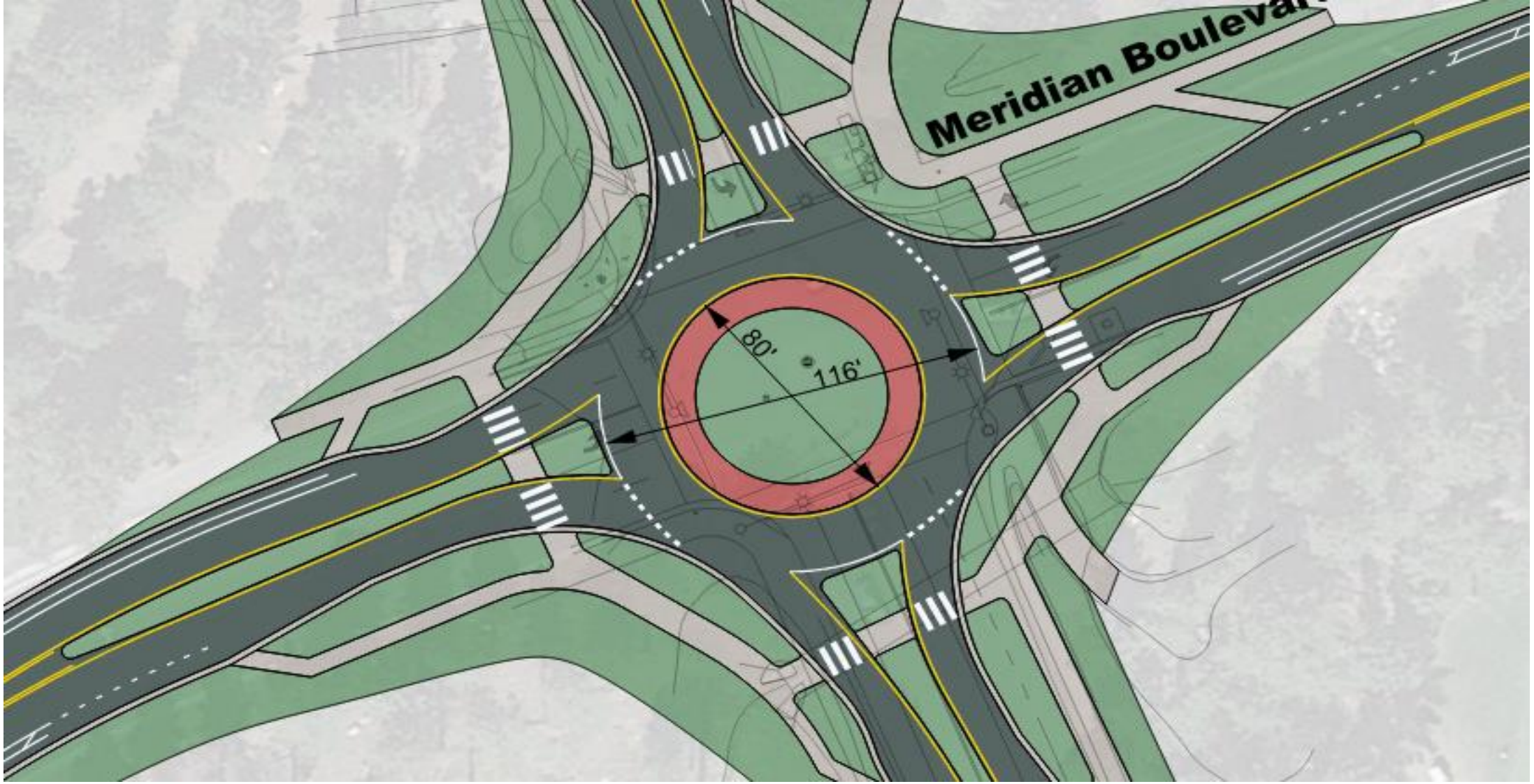
$2,938,310 in STIP, SB-1, IIG
Contract was awarded in 2022
Paving Thursday
Ribbon cutting 10/18





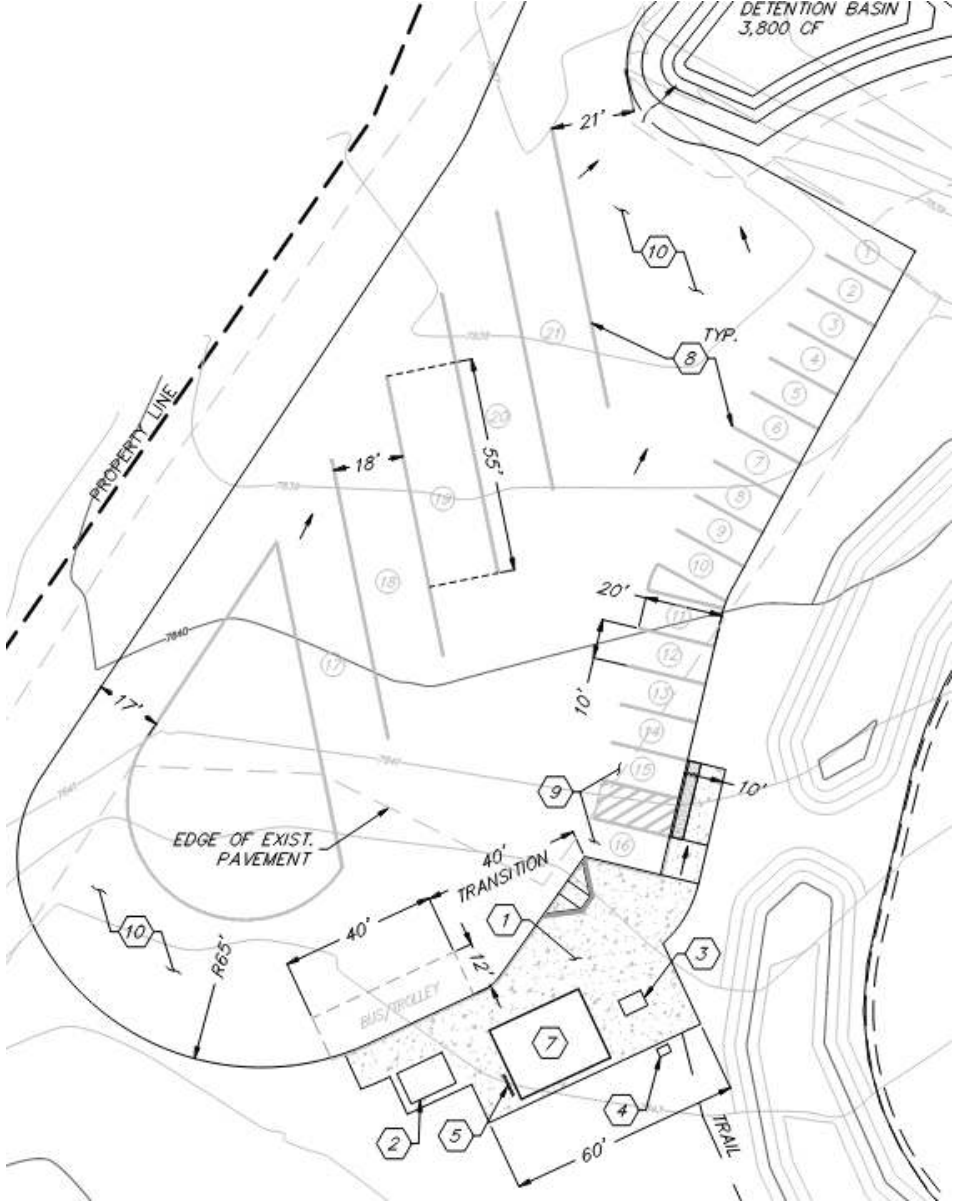
Minaret MUP

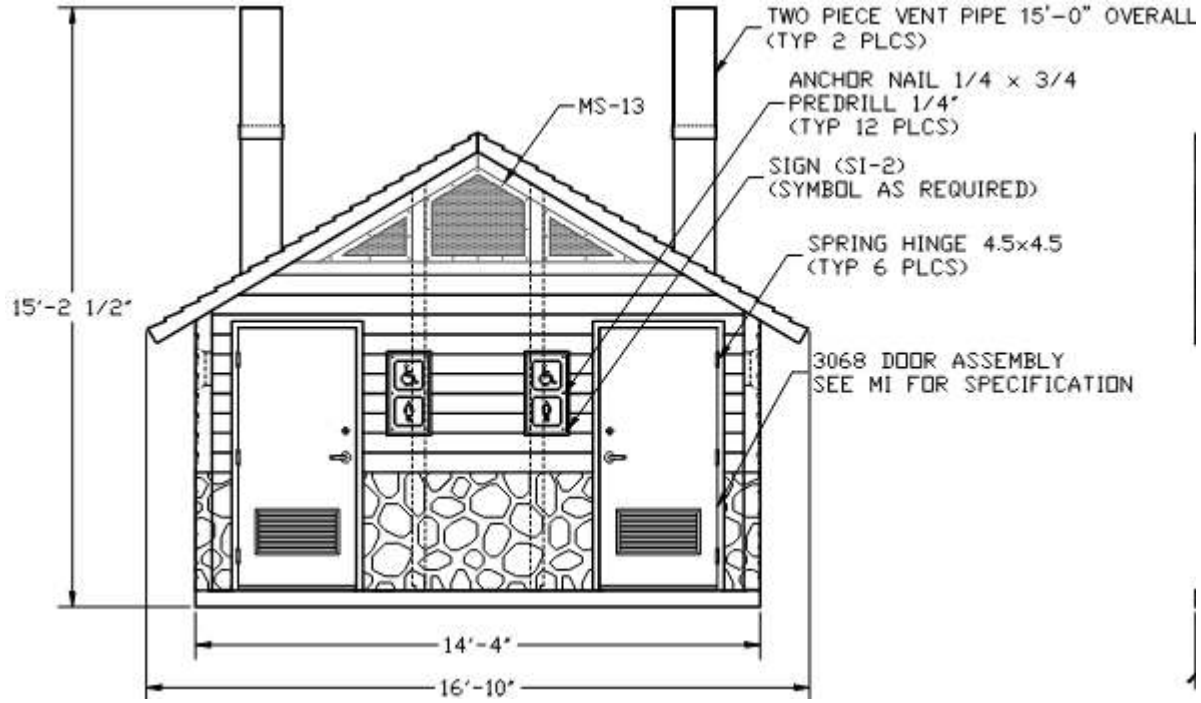
Design / Plans & Specifications are complete
Programmed $3M in current STIP cycle
State will determine final schedule/programming



Minaret and Meridian RAB

Feasibility work completed
Programmed $200K for Design
Will likely be programmed in next STIP cycle





Sherwin Trail Head

$953k grant to MLR / TOML Partnership
Summer 2024 Construction
Restroom, parking, wayfinding, trash



Pickle Ball Complex

$100k 6 Courts on old ice rink slab
Now open

There's more…

Road and MUP rehab ($3-4M)
Reds Meadow Road ($30M)
EV Charging
Storm Drains - John Muir & Davison ($200k)
Mammoth Creek Park Landscaping ($500k)
Municipal Bike Park / Pump Track
Municipal Bouldering Park
OMR MUP – Initial scoping phase
Main Street MUP ($200k)
Fuel Island ($450k)
Communication System ($1.5M)
Outdoor Amphitheater ($300k)

Canyon Blvd Ped & Transit ($600k)
Special Events Venue
Park n Ride Restroom
Airport –
Transit –
Trails –
Snow Removal Equipment –

Planning and Economic Development Commission
Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Consider adopting a resolution recommending that the Town Council accept the Eastern Sierra Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Commission Meeting Date: 10/11/2023

Prepared by: Daniel C. Holler, Town Manager
Nolan Bobroff, Acting Community and Economic Development Director

Recommended Motion: Review the final CEDS document and recommend that the Town Council adopt a resolution of acceptance

Background: The Eastern Sierra, including Alpine, Inyo and Mono Counties, has completed the development of a regional economic development strategy required to access federal funding opportunities known as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The project is funded by a grant provided by the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and has been prepared by Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA). A stakeholder committee comprised of staff from each member agency as well as TPMA worked on the process to complete the draft CEDS which included comprehensive stakeholder meetings throughout the Eastern Sierra during the week of April 24, 2023. The draft CEDS was reviewed by the public from July 31-August 30, 2023 and comments have been incorporated into the final document as appropriate. The draft document has been provided to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) for review and they have confirmed that it meets all of the requirements for acceptance.

Summary: The draft CEDS is a strategic roadmap to promote sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the region. This document reflects the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders, including local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies, with the aim of enhancing the economic well-being of our communities. The adopted CEDS will be used to help guide economic development in the Eastern Sierra and will also make the Town eligible for additional grant funding through the EDA and other sources.

The process requires that the elected bodies of the partner agencies adopt a resolution of support for EDA acceptance of the CEDS. The Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG) will be the entity that submits the CEDS to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) for formal approval. The Planning and Economic Development Commission should consider the document and adopt a resolution recommending that the Town Council accept the CEDS.

Attachment:
Attachment 1: Resolution Accepting the 2024- 2029 Eastern Sierra Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

RESOLUTION NO. PEDC 2023-07

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, RECOMMENDING TO THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCEPTANCE OF THE EASTERN SIERRA COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR ALPINE, INYO AND MONO COUNTIES, THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, AND THE CITY OF BISHOP, AS PREPARED, AND AUTHORIZING THE EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO SUBMIT TO THE U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires the preparation and adoption of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to be accepted by the Alpine County Board of Supervisors, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, the Mono County Board of Supervisors, the Mammoth Lakes Town Council, and the Bishop City Council and the EDA prior to consideration of certain federal funding; and

WHEREAS, a CEDS is a document developed by jurisdictions for the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) to apply for vital funding for community economic development initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Counties of Alpine, Inyo and Mono, Town of Mammoth Lakes and City of Bishop conducted its CEDS process following federal Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 13 CPR §303.6; and

WHEREAS, the CEDS takes into account and, where appropriate, incorporates or leverages other regional planning efforts, including the use of available federal funds, private sector resources, and state support which can advance a region's CEDS goals and objectives; and

WHEREAS, the CEDS process analyzes existing regional conditions, opportunities, and global economic conditions, leading to a region-specific strategy-driven plan for economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the CEDS must be updated every five years to stay relevant with changing economic conditions and to qualify for U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, in addition to summarizing the status of the local economy and areas of opportunities, the focal point of the CEDS is identification of projects that may be eligible for federal grant funding; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the CEDS is a federal requirement which the Alpine County, Inyo County and Mono County, Town of Mammoth Lakes, City of Bishop, and qualified organizations within the region, must meet to apply to EDA for Public Works or Economic Adjustment Assistance Program grants; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments serves as a regional joint powers authority representing Inyo County, Mono County, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and the City of Bishop, and is the appropriate regional organization to serve as the lead agency to submit the CEDS to the EDA; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission makes the following recommendations to Town Council:

1. Recommends that the Town Council finds that this project is exempt pursuant to the CEQA General Rule (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)) because all future actions from the CEDS will be subject to additional review and there is no possibility that this action will have a significant effect on the environment; and
2. Recommends to the Town Council acceptance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as described in Exhibit "A".

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of October 2023, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

RECUSED:

ATTEST:

_____	_____
Nolan Bobroff Acting Community and Economic Development Director	Michael Vanderhurst Chair of the Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
Resolution No. PEDC 2023-07

2024-2029 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)



Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

Eastern Sierra Region

2024-2029

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Natural Assets
Demographic and Socioeconomic Data
Labor Force Analysis
Infrastructure Assets
Regional Environmental Considerations
Regional Economic Overview
Economic Resiliency

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Vision Statement
Goals and Objectives

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Appendix A: Resolution
Appendix B: CEDS Steering Committee & Participating Organizations
Appendix C: Verification of the 30-Day Public Comment Period

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is made possible in part from a grant from US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Golden State Finance Authority is honored to have served as the contract manager and grant administrator for this project on behalf of its member counties.

Executive Summary

The following Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) represents a commitment towards collaborative economic development between key stakeholders in Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties. These counties comprise the Eastern Sierra Region of California and together are planning for economic prosperity through the leveraging of shared strengths and navigation of shared challenges.

The plan will be adopted by the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG), which includes Inyo and Mono Counties as members. Alpine County will adopt the plan through a resolution and work closely with ESCOG and its member agencies throughout implementation.

About The Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

The Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agency made up of the following member agencies: City of Bishop, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Inyo County, and Mono County. The ESCOG coordinates regional planning and economic development efforts throughout the Eastern Sierra, working cooperatively with local, state, and federal partners to support community development, economic diversification, sustainable recreation, ecosystem management, and climate resiliency for a more prosperous, sustainable, and resilient region.

The ESCOG is empowered to work across jurisdictional boundaries by the Sustainable Recreation and Ecosystem Management Program, the Community Economic Resiliency Fund Pilot Program and the Inyo Mono Broadband Consortium Program, which were adopted by the resolution of all four member agencies[1].

The ESCOG will serve as the lead entity in the region to submit the plan to the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA), track plan progress and submit annual progress reports as required by the EDA.

1 Organization description provided by ESCOG

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Connection to Community
- Tourism & Recreation Industry
- Community Resilience
- Natural Assets

Weaknesses

- Housing
- Public & Utility Land Ownership
- Talent Attraction & Retention
- Remoteness

Opportunities

- Housing & Infrastructure
- Education & Entrepreneurship
- Industry Diversification
- Transportation

Threats

- Climate Change & Natural Disaster
- Infrastructure
- Government Relations
- Cost of Living

VISION STATEMENT

The Eastern Sierra region envisions a future which includes economic prosperity and environmental stewardship realized through collaborative efforts to preserve natural assets and historic culture, enhance regional connectivity and resiliency, and advance vibrant and inclusive communities.

Strategic Action Plan

The strategic action plan builds on this vision by building goals and objectives around the following focus areas:

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

From roadways to broadband to air travel, the importance of connectivity was a focus in stakeholder sessions and is supported by regional data and literature.

COMMUNITY & CULTURE

The Eastern Sierra region boasts a strong culture of community among the residents, workers, and other key stakeholders with vested interest in the success of the region and its economies.

ECONOMIC EXPANSION & DIVERSIFICATION

With the undisputed asset of a healthy tourism and outdoor recreation industry, regional leaders want to leverage the industry's benefits for economic growth while pursuing opportunities for economic diversification in pursuit of increased community resiliency.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

The region has a robust inventory of natural assets to protect, frequent exposure to natural hazards, and a population accustomed to persevering and "bouncing back," calling for efforts related to environmental resilience and sustainability.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & ADVOCACY

Regional collaboration and advocacy with state and federal entities is an important strategic implementation item and essential to pursue promising state and federal funding opportunities.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY & LAND USE

The extremely limited supply of privately owned land within the region colored the discussion around housing and land use, with stakeholders frustrated by rising housing costs and lack of opportunities for development.

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

GOAL: Improve and enhance regional access and connectivity within the region and with surrounding geographies.

- Increase access to digital resources through broadband infrastructure buildout across the region.
- Enhance the regional transportation network to provide residents, visitors, and businesses with more accessible, reliable options for moving in, out, and within the region.
- Enhance emergency response services to ensure remote communities are equipped for periods of time with no access to services.

COMMUNITY & CULTURE

GOAL: Maintain and capitalize on strong community culture.

- Improve partnerships and interagency collaboration to benefit localities and facilitate regionally-focused efforts.
- Garner support for new economic development-related initiatives, projects, etc. by developing and capitalizing on strong community engagement.
- Enhance the region's existing quality of life with additional amenities to attract and retain talent.
- Strengthen tribal relationships in the communities and counties and involve leadership in conversations and decisions to plan and implement strategies.
- Build out a more robust, uniform regional communication strategy for sharing information, including emergency responses, with people who live, work, and recreate in the region.

ECONOMIC EXPANSION & DIVERSIFICATION

GOAL: Grow and diversify the regional economy through support of existing and new businesses.

- Build relationships with existing businesses and respond to their needs.
- Build upon and transform opportunities for businesses to convene by industry sector to better understand and address common issues related to supply chain, workforce, etc.
- Enhance network of entrepreneurial and small business resources to encourage new business development within the region.
- Initiate and support efforts related to real estate solutions that complement industry and residential needs.
- Thoroughly study and review the status of the labor market and gaps in workforce services provision, for both employers and individuals.
- Identify additional data-informed opportunities that may exist for economic diversification and expansion.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL: Prioritize opportunities to preserve natural assets and support service provision needs of residents during weather and disaster events.

- Reduce the challenges experienced by residents and visitors during climate events.
- Enhance the network of industry and community stewards to develop, adopt, and promote guidelines for sustainable tourism.
- Consider sustainable tourism as a budding industry with workforce needs and entrepreneurial opportunities.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & ADVOCACY

GOAL: Promote stronger government affairs & advocacy efforts.

- Build capacity within ESCOG and its partners for improved government affairs, prioritizing relationship-building with the key state and federal entities who directly impact the implementation of CEDS strategy recommendations.
- Study the broader economic impact of regional strategy recommendations to garner more support from state and federal government agencies.
- Equip local government partners with knowledge and capacity for identifying and securing federal funding to ensure relevant opportunities can be pursued.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY & LAND USE

GOAL: Increase stock and availability of housing units with a focus on affordability for regional workforce.

- Increase amount of available land for private development.
- Work to improve and expand housing stock on available land.
- Expand additional housing options within affordable range for regional workforce.

The strategic action plan includes an evaluation framework to support implementation. It provides action steps, timelines for implementation, suggested metrics, and possible funding sources. The ESCOG will review progress on an annual basis and use the evaluation framework to assist with submission of the CEDS Annual Performance Report required of the EDA. Strategies and implementation plans may be updated as new information is gathered or new priorities are identified.

Recent updates to the EDA's guidelines for the CEDS process include that the concept of economic resilience must be incorporated into the process and the final plan. In the Eastern Sierra CEDS, economic resilience emerged as a theme that touched several main themes and priority areas and is incorporated in several key areas throughout the plan.

Introduction

This CEDS represents a commitment towards collaborative economic development between key stakeholders in Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties. These counties comprise the Eastern Sierra region of California, and together are planning for economic prosperity through the leveraging of shared strengths and navigation of shared challenges.

The plan will be adopted by the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG), which includes Inyo and Mono Counties as members. Alpine County will adopt the plan through a resolution and work closely with ESCOG and its member agencies throughout implementation.

About The Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

The Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agency made up of the following member agencies: City of Bishop, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Alpine County, Inyo County, and Mono County. The ESCOG coordinates regional planning and economic development efforts throughout the Eastern Sierra, working cooperatively with local, state, and federal partners to support community development, economic diversification, sustainable recreation, ecosystem management and climate resiliency for a more prosperous, sustainable, and resilient region.

The ESCOG is empowered to work across jurisdictional boundaries by the Sustainable Recreation and Ecosystem Management Program, the Community Economic Resiliency Fund Pilot Program and the Inyo Mono Broadband Consortium Program, which were adopted by the resolution of all four member agencies[2].

2 Organization description provided by ESCOG

What is a CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a unified, regionally focused action plan that provides a framework for an area's economic growth and community development. The CEDS serves as an economic blueprint for the region and establishes a collaborative process that will help create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, and improve living conditions. It is a continuous planning process that addresses the economic challenges and opportunities of an area, providing objectives to strengthen economies through regional strategies which focus on economic and workforce development, quality of life, transportation, and other vital infrastructure. This five-year CEDS will guide the direction of the Eastern Sierra region from 2024-2029, encouraging new, collaborative efforts at the regional and local levels.

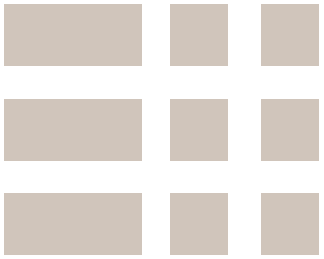
The Eastern Sierra CEDS addresses the four required elements of a CEDS, including:

- **Summary Background** of the region's economic conditions and demographics.
- **SWOT Analysis** to identify the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- **Strategic Direction/Action Plan** to incorporate tactics identified through the planning process, other plans, and stakeholder feedback to develop the priority strategies for the region.
- **Evaluation Framework** to identify and monitor performance measures associated with the plan.

For more information about the EDA and investment priorities related to CEDS, please visit https://www.eda.gov/funding/investment-priorities.

Eastern Sierra Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The CEDS builds on the region's strengths, prioritizes key regional priorities, and emphasizes intentional collaboration to encourage coordinated growth and prosperity, as informed by data analysis and stakeholder engagement. The 2024-2029 Eastern Sierra Regional CEDS was designed for regional, city, and county economic development practitioners, business leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders implementing programs that support the growth of businesses and enhance opportunities for individuals to access economic mobility in the region. The key component of this CEDS is to maintain and bolster the regional economy and job growth by continued linkage of the region's workforce skills and strengths, recreational assets and amenities, and to meet the needs of high-growth and emerging industries by maximizing assets in each of the three counties.



Summary Background and Regional Overview

Cultural Assets

General Community Culture

The Eastern Sierra region in California includes Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties. The region boasts a rich history of mining, ranching, and agriculture, which has influenced the region's cultural heritage, and it is also known for its stunning natural beauty and abundance of outdoor recreational experiences. The region is home to the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range, including Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the contiguous United States, as well as a few national forests, wilderness areas, and state and national parks. Residents and visitors can experience desert and mountain landscapes with access to lake settings as well. The Eastern Sierra region is largely rural, with many small towns and communities scattered throughout the region. These rural areas offer a unique blend of traditional and modern lifestyles, with a focus on outdoor recreation and a connection to the natural environment.

Tribal Communities

The Eastern Sierra Region includes a significant population of indigenous communities. Each tribe has a rich history in the region and provides meaningful economic impact for the counties in which they are located.

Alpine County is densely populated with indigenous people making up about a quarter of the entire county's population[3]. It houses some land belonging to the Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, though most of the tribe's land and resources reside in Nevada. The Hung-A-Lel-Ti Community, also known as the Woodfords Community is the Southern band of the Washoe Tribe and is located in the Woodfords/ Markleeville area of Alpine County. Key assets here include the Woodfords Indian Education Center (WIEC) which provides education services to tribal youth and the Hung-A-Lel-Ti Wellness Center and Gym which hosts recreational activities and aspires to offers Washoe language and cultural classes for the community.

3 Headwaters Economics and U.S. Census Bureau

Inyo County is home to the Fort Independence Tribe of Paiute Indians, Bishop Paiute Tribe, the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley, and Timbisha Shoshone Tribe of Death Valley. Inyo County's active economic development efforts put forth by tribal communities have led to many unique assets. A large travel plaza within the Fort Independence reservation welcomes visitors to the area's natural desert beauty. The Bishop Paiute Tribe boasts an exciting casino and commercial park that currently houses a Bureau of Land Management facility, DMV office, the Toiyabe Indian Health Project, and more. Finally, the Owens Valley Paiute-Shoshone Cultural Center is a critical resource for the entire Eastern Sierra region in terms of historic preservation and community programming, as a center dedicated to sharing and preserving the history and cultural heritage of those indigenous to the Owens Valley.

Mono County is home to the Bridgeport Indian Colony, Utu Utu Gwaitu Tribe of the Benton Reservation, Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe, and Antelope Valley Indian Community. These tribes maintain strong connections to their land, traditions, and communities which influence many of their current activities. Benton Station, owned and operated by the Benton Paiute Reservation, has been running for several years and is a beloved stop for travelers visiting Yosemite National Park and surrounding attractions. The Bridgeport Indian Colony has taken a leadership position in Northern Mono County by recently purchasing the Walker Country Store and Bridgeport General Store. Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Indian Community Cultural Preservation Association organizes traditional walks annually coordinating with neighboring tribes to experience the land and ecosystems and pass down valuable historic knowledge.

Tribal Communities in the Eastern Sierra Region	County
Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada	Alpine
Antelope Valley Indian Community	Mono
Bridgeport Indian Colony	Mono
Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe	Mono
Utu Utu Gwaitu Tribe of the Benton Reservation	Mono
Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley	Inyo
Bishop Paiute Tribe	Inyo
Fort Independence Tribe of Paiute Indians	Inyo
Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe	Inyo
Timbisha Shoshone Tribe of Death Valley	Inyo

Table 1: Tribal Communities in the Eastern Sierra Region

Regional Tourism Assets

There is significant pride across the region for the unique, accessible natural assets that attract visitors from near and far. Many visitors that come to the region for various recreation and tourism activities are residents of other areas in California. For example in Mono County, Californians comprised nearly half of the County's total visitation in 2018[4]. Other visitors to the region come from all corners of the United States, as well as internationally, due to the draw of well-known assets including, but not limited to, Death Valley National Park and the Pacific Crest Trail. The region's tourism partners showcase a wide range of experiences and activities, including guided tours and maps around themes of leaves changing and arts and culture, hot spots for wildflowers and fishing, theater festivals, and outdoor recreation activities for all four seasons. The region houses several museums that showcase artifacts and tell the stories of the tribes and settlers that have contributed to the rich history in the region.

Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy a wide range of activities in the Eastern Sierra, including hiking, backpacking, camping, fishing, hunting, rock climbing, mountain biking, and winter sports such as skiing and snowboarding. The region is also a popular destination for water sports, with numerous lakes, rivers, and streams offering opportunities for boating, kayaking, canoeing, and paddleboarding.



4 Profile of Mono Visitors & Economic Impacts of Tourism

Natural Assets

The Eastern Sierra region's natural assets are plentiful[5]. Death Valley National Park is located in the southeastern part of Inyo County and features breathtaking landscapes, including sand dunes, salt flats, and rugged mountains, and offers a wide range of activities for visitors, including but not limited to hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, and stargazing. Mono County boasts the Mammoth Lakes area, with world-class skiing and snowboarding. The John Muir Wilderness in the Inyo National Forest spans 100 miles across the Sierra Nevada mountain range and offers some of the best backpacking opportunities in the region. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, including the John Muir Trail, spans 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada and passes through Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties, a unique experience for backpackers and equestrians.

A non-exhaustive list of notable natural assets includes:

- Alabama Hills Recreation Area
- Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest
- Ansel Adams Wilderness
- Bodie State Historic Park
- Carson River Hot Springs
- Death Valley National Park
- Devils Postpile National Monument
- Eldorado National Forest
- Headwaters to Lake Tahoe
- Hoover Wilderness
- Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- Inyo National Forest
- Manzanar Historical Site
- Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area
- Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve
- Mount Whitney in the Sierra Nevada range
- Sierra National Forest (just outside the region)
- Stanislaus National Forest
- Yosemite National Park (just outside the region)

5 California Wilderness Areas

Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

Population Estimates

The data presented in this section has been collected for the purpose of identifying trends and other aspects associated with economic development strategies. In many cases the data comes from public sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) and the American Community Survey (ACS), for which the 2021 5-Year Estimates are presented. These data sets are widely regarded as the most accurate estimates available. However, these sources do have their limits. In the case of very low-population regions, the ACS estimates have an unusually high reported margin for error. Such is the case with Alpine County, California[6]. Because Alpine County is only one of three counties presented in much of the data sets and estimates below, the effect on the overall accuracy is not necessarily problematic. However, in situations where only Alpine's estimates are presented, the uncertainty in this data should be considered.

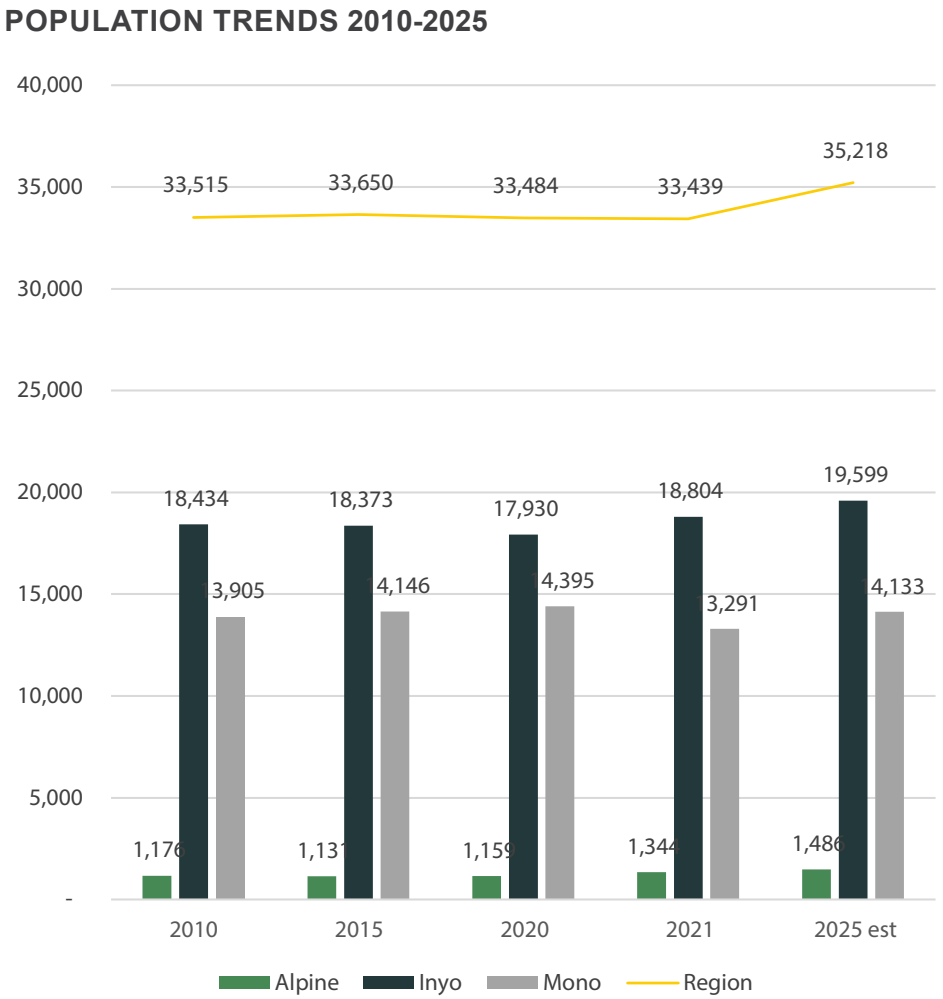


Figure 1: Eastern Sierra Region Population Trends. 2010-2025 (proj.). Sources: ACS/ Lightcast Q1.2023.

6 For example, the estimated 2021 population for Alpine County is 1,344, but the Margin of Error (MoE) is stated as a plus or minus 228. This means that the ACS estimates with 95% certainty that Alpine County's population is somewhere between 1,116 and 1,572. These high MoEs suggest a relatively large uncertainty in the accuracy of the data presented.

Age

The population pyramid in Figure 2 contains the population, gender, and age distribution estimates for the three-county region. Of note is the 20+ percent of the population that is older than the "retirement age" of 65. Adding individuals 55-64 years old who are "approaching retirement" brings the number of individuals over 55 years to 36.44% of the population. This is ten percentage points higher than the statewide average. For context, there are fewer individuals between 25 and 54 years of age in the region of Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties than over 55 years of age.

This aging population may pose a threat to the regional economy in the coming years as another 16.3% of the population will reach age 65 in the next ten years. This likely means that more people will exit the workforce than will enter it if current trends remain consistent. An aging population can also place a greater strain on regional resources, infrastructure, and services.

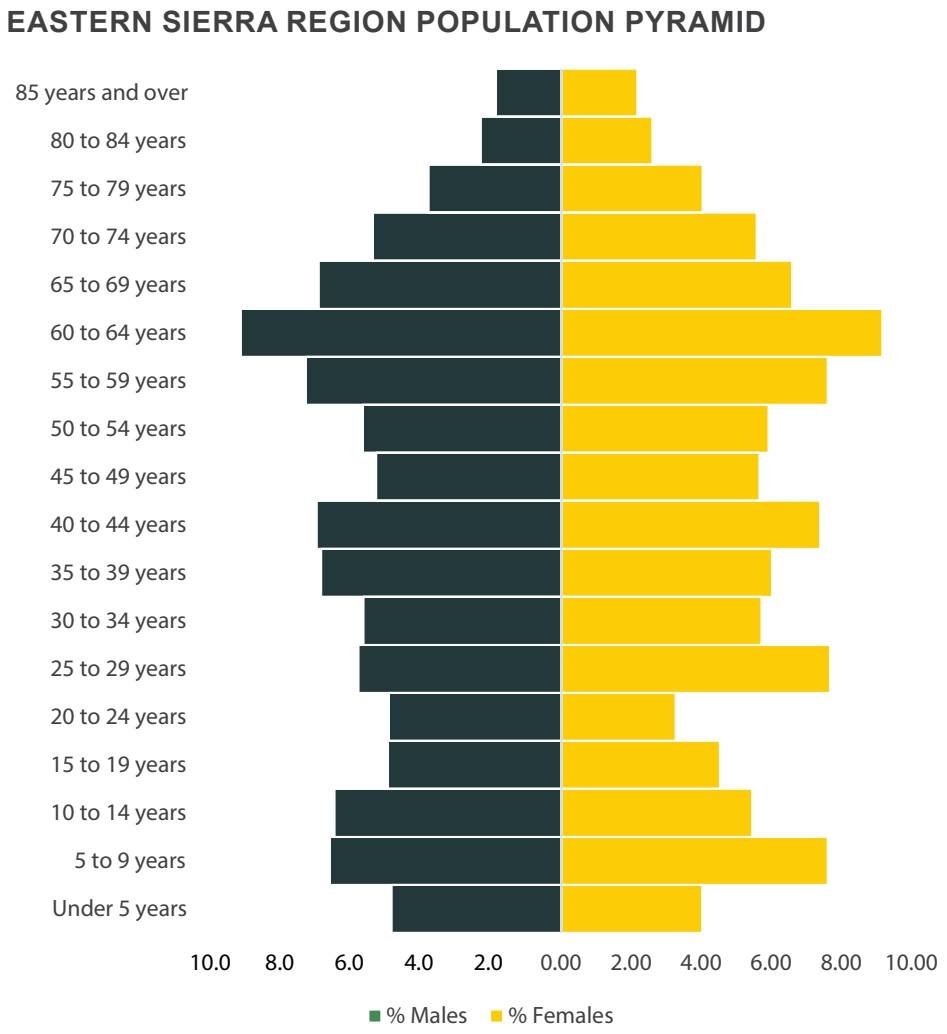


Figure 2: Eastern Sierra Population Pyramid, Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year estimates

Race and Ethnicity

Overall, the racial breakdown of the three-county region is just over three-quarters White, over eight percent American Indian and Alaskan Native, and another 8.5 percent two-or-more races. Mono County has the largest percentage of White and Asian-American residents.

According to ACS estimates, the three-county Eastern Sierra region is roughly one-quarter Hispanic or Latino. Inyo and Mono Counties largely represent a similar ethnic distribution. However, estimates for Alpine County indicate that the population is just under 15% Hispanic or Latino.

POPULATION BY ETHNICITY

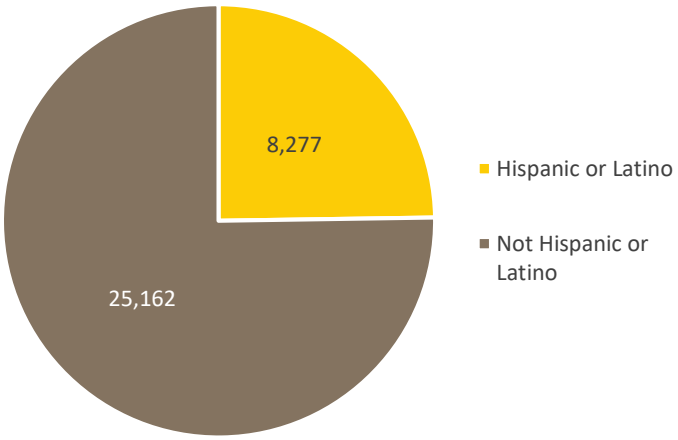
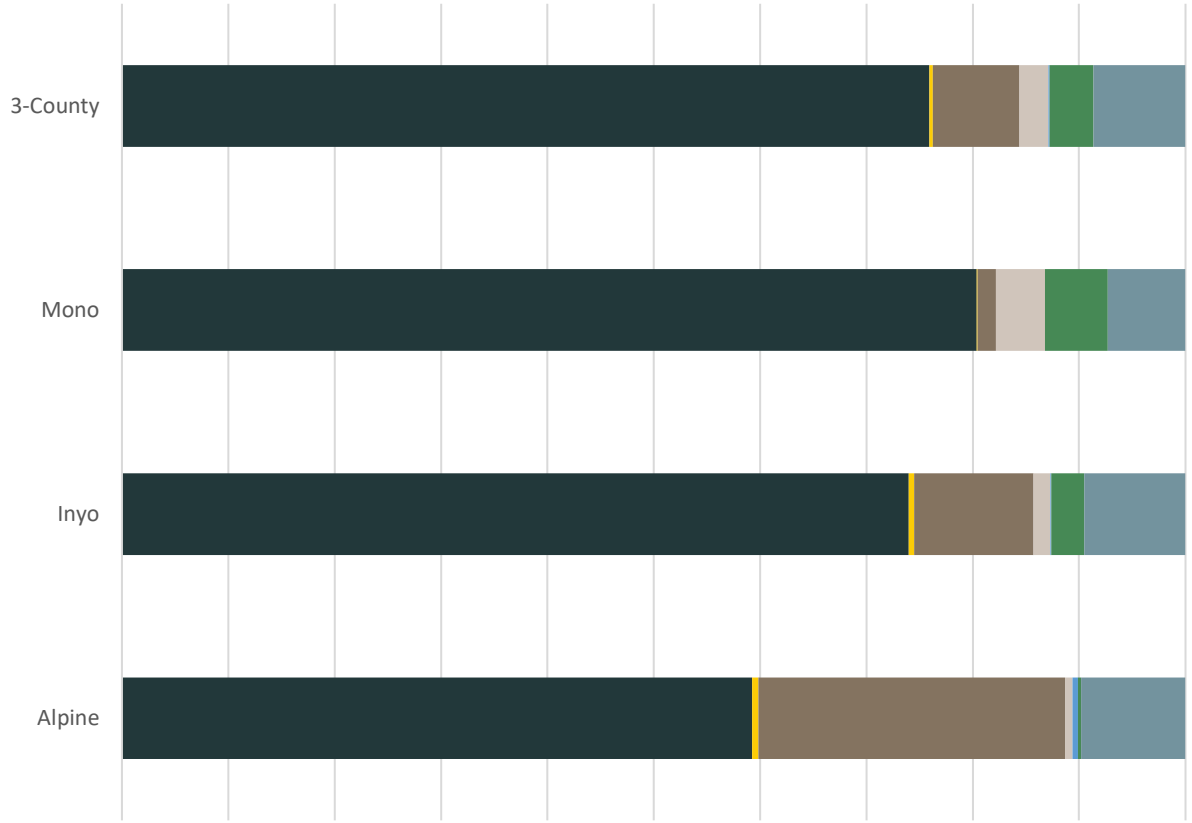


Figure 3: Eastern Sierra Population by Ethnicity, Source: ACS: 2021 5-Year Estimates

POPULATION BY RACE



	Alpine	Inyo	Mono	3-County
White	59.20%	74.00%	80.30%	75.92%
Black or African American	0.60%	0.50%	0.10%	0.34%
American Indian and Alaska Native	28.80%	11.20%	1.70%	8.12%
Asian	0.70%	1.60%	4.60%	2.75%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0.50%	0.10%	0.00%	0.09%
Some other race	0.30%	3.10%	5.90%	4.12%
Two or more races	9.80%	9.50%	7.30%	8.65%

Figure 4: Eastern Sierra Population by Race. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Poverty

According to 2021 statistics, poverty is most prevalent among children throughout the region. While overall poverty is estimated in the three-county region at just over 10.5%, Alpine County is estimated to have the highest rate of poverty at 12%. For residents in the region ages 25 and over, poverty is most prevalent among those who are not high school graduates at 22%. Although White residents make up a vast majority of the counties, the poverty rate for these individuals is below 9%, where poverty rates in the Native American and African American communities is 15.41% and 14.29% respectively.

POVERTY STATUS BY AGE BRACKET

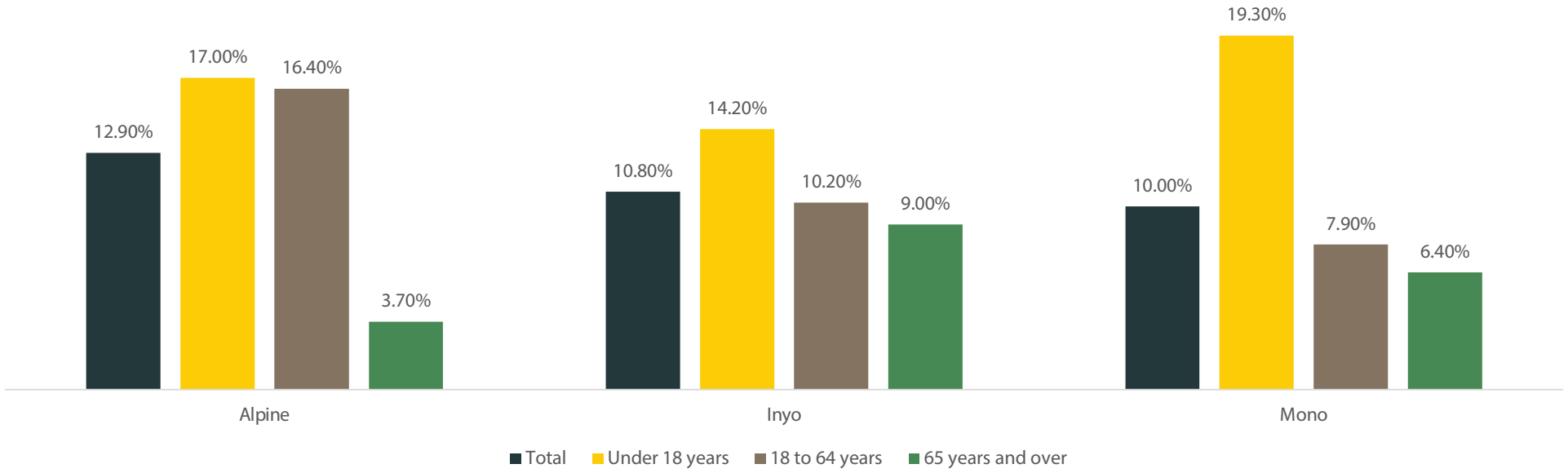


Figure 5: Poverty Status by Age Bracket. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Housing Statistics

Median Household Income

According to ACS estimates, Alpine County has the highest median household income (MHHI) in the region at $96,000. This would be higher than the statewide median of $84,907. However, as is often the case in many popular tourism areas, these figures may be inflated by incomes associated with vacation or other second-homes. It is likely that the median income for full-time residents is significantly lower.

The MHHI for renter-occupied households in all three counties is roughly the same at around $54,000. For Inyo County, there is an unusually small gap between the MHHI of owner-occupied and renter-occupied households. Alpine County shows the largest gap between these two groups of residents.

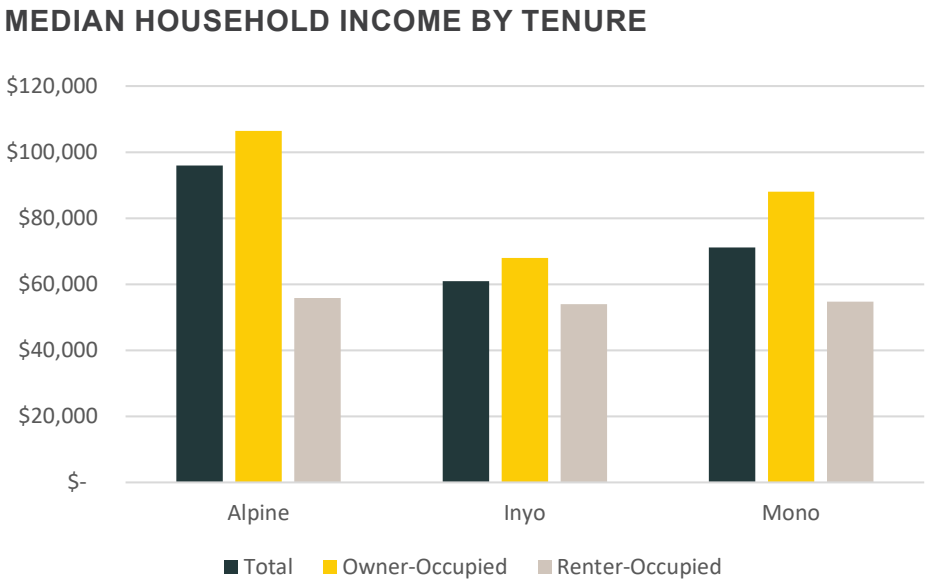


Figure 6: Median Household Income by Tenure. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Seasonal Homes & Vacancy

Given the region's natural beauty and recreational appeal, a significant amount of the housing stock is owned by non-permanent residents. Owners of these homes likely use their properties as vacation homes for short-term stays, and they hold permanent residence elsewhere. Since these seasonal homes are unoccupied for much of the year, they are considered to be "vacant" by the American Community Survey. As such, the data associated with the homes (and their owners) is excluded from the analysis of the non-vacant housing stock provided throughout the remainder of this report.

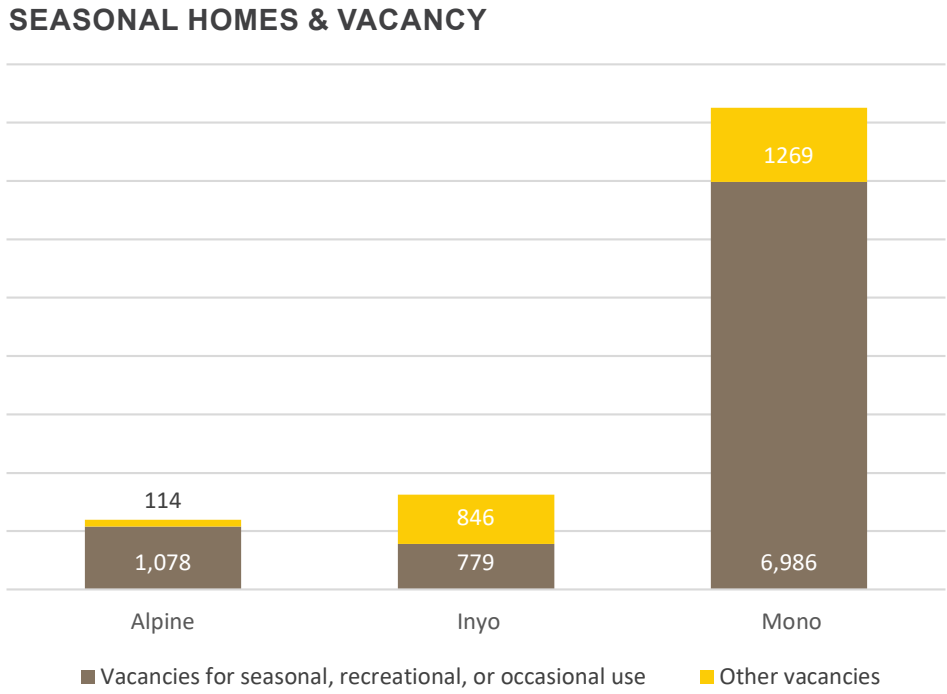


Figure 7: Seasonal Homes & Vacancy. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates

Housing Costs 2017-2021

From 2017-2021, housing costs across the three counties appear to have been affected differently by the COVID-19 pandemic. These costs rose dramatically in many regions across the country due to the pandemic, and Mono County appears to have shown a similar trajectory with a 31.32% increase in housing costs from 2017 to 2021. Housing costs in Alpine County rose by about 12.4% over the same period. Estimates in Alpine County show a significant adjustment during the years of 2020 and 2021. Housing costs had been dropping in the years leading up to the COVID-19 outbreak but jumped significantly after 2020.

MEDIAN HOUSING COSTS 2017-2021

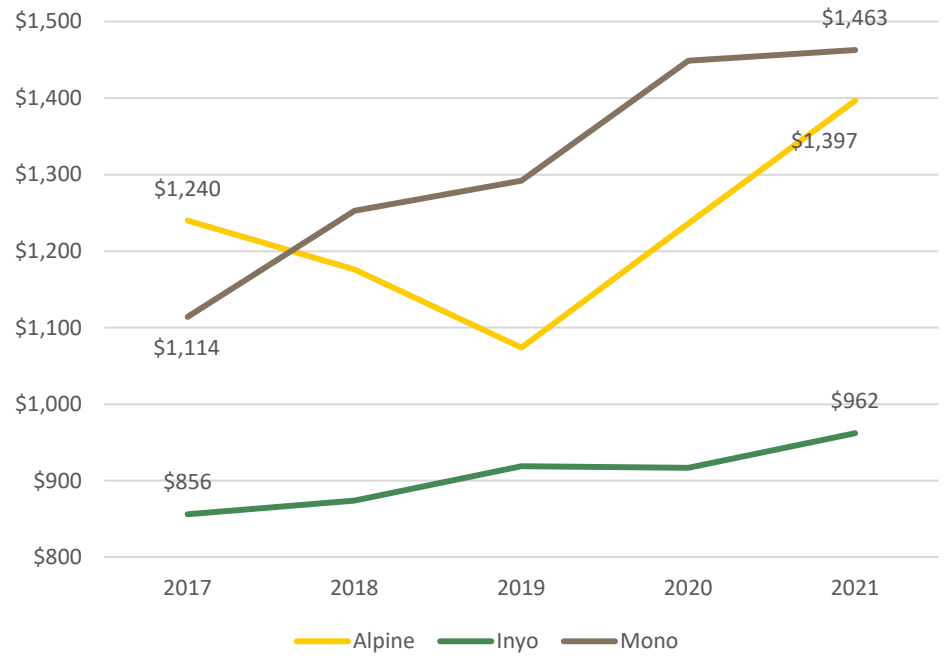


Figure 8: Median Housing Costs 2017-2021. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.



Housing Cost Burden

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designates a household as “cost burdened” if more than 30% of the household’s income is spent on housing costs, which include mortgage/ rent and utilities. Where housing costs top this 30% threshold, it is determined that the household is having to limit expenses on other essential needs such as food, clothing, etc.

According to ACS estimates, Alpine County has the lowest incidence of housing cost burden, with a highly unusual 10% of renter-occupied households receiving this designation. The causes for this anomaly are yet to be fully determined but is in part the result of higher-than-average income estimates and relatively low median rental costs.

In general, the percentage of cost-burdened households in the three-county region is somewhat low relative to many communities around the country. However, it should be noted that the available ACS data are 5-year estimates, with the most recent data coming from 2021. In the last two years, the housing market has experienced significant shifts which could result in greater cost burden; if regional household incomes have fallen or stagnated while housing costs have risen, the financial strain placed on owners and renters alike could be increasing. While the figures below indicate that between a fifth and a third of residents in the region are spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs, the true incidence of housing cost burden could be higher.

Housing Development and Trends

Housing development, like many types of development across the region, is limited by the lack of privately owned land. New housing development is likely to be infill or redevelopment, as communities have little room to expand. Additionally, some stakeholders noted that second homeowners and short-term rentals further constrict the housing market, driving up prices and limiting housing stock.

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS COST BURDENED BY TENURE

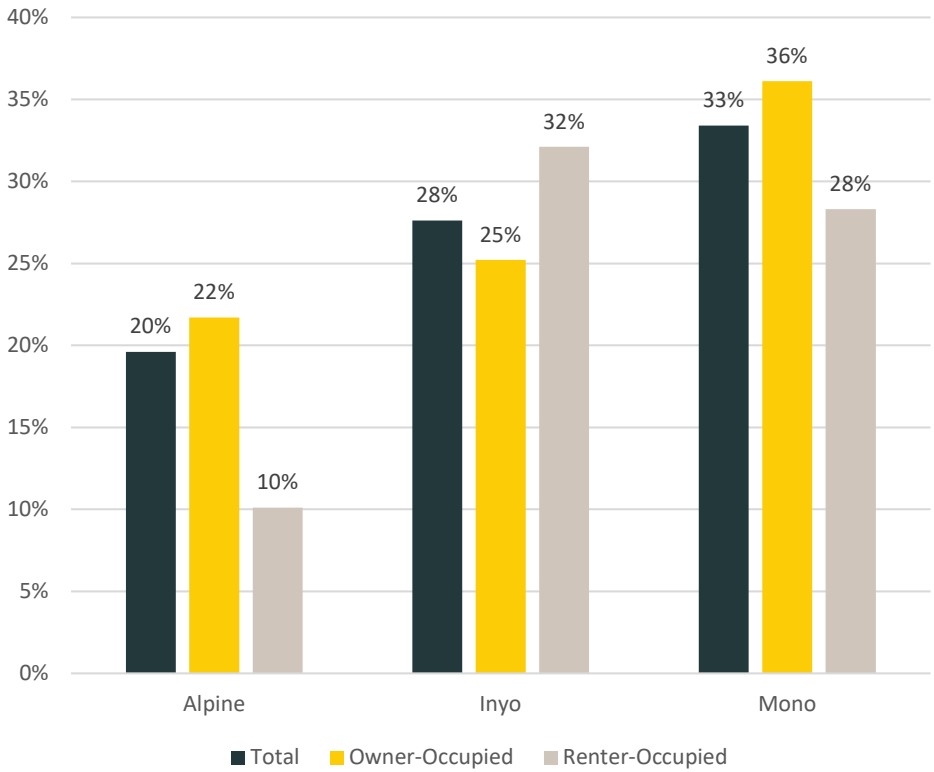


Figure 9: Percent of Households Cost Burdened by Tenure. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Cost of Living

Table 2 contains cost of living estimates in Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties as determined by the MIT Cost of Living Calculator[7]. These figures compare what is considered a "living wage" and "poverty wage" to the state's minimum wage. In almost all cases, the minimum wage does surpass the poverty wage throughout the region, although in some cases it does not. According to these estimates, the minimum wage is not considered a living wage for any type of household. While this is not necessarily uncommon, it is not currently possible in any scenario to live comfortably on a minimum wage in the region.

	1 ADULT (1 WORKING)				2 ADULTS (1 WORKING)				2 ADULTS (BOTH WORKING)			
	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
Alpine												
Living Wage	$16.39	$35.08	$45.57	$61.40	$26.80	$33.63	$38.58	$43.82	$13.40	$19.69	$25.07	$30.65
Poverty Wage	$6.53	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$15.61	$4.40	$5.54	$6.67	$7.81
Minimum Wage	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50
Mono												
Living Wage	$18.48	$39.33	$52.97	$72.23	$28.40	$35.43	$40.38	$46.06	$14.20	$21.80	$28.46	$35.91
Poverty Wage	$6.53	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$15.61	$4.40	$5.54	$6.67	$7.81
Minimum Wage	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50
Inyo												
Living Wage	$16.60	$35.57	$46.61	$63.00	$27.17	$33.65	$38.61	$43.86	$13.59	$19.93	$25.55	$31.40
Poverty Wage	$6.53	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$8.80	$11.07	$13.34	$15.61	$4.40	$5.54	$6.67	$7.81
Minimum Wage	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50	$15.50

Table 2: Eastern Sierra Cost of Living. Source: MIT Cost of Living Calculator.

7 MIT Living Wage Calculator

Community Health

Table 3 displays the 2023 County Health Rankings for the State of California[8]. Prepared by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps program develops health metrics for nearly every county in the country. These rankings represent data from dozens of measures from health outcomes and behaviors. In Table 2, the county ranks (from 1 to 58, encompassing all California counties) are provided for each of the Eastern Sierra counties based on its score for each ranked measure.

County	Length of Life	Quality of Life	Health Behaviors	Clinical Care	Social & Economic Factors	Physical Environment
Alpine County	29th	21st	29th	49th	53rd	1st
Inyo County	45th	45th	28th	36th	21st	2nd
Mono County	1st	34th	25th	31st	12th	6th

Table 3: Community Health Rankings for Eastern Sierra Counties. Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

8 California County Health Rankings

Labor Force Analysis

Labor Force Participation

Although the three-county Eastern Sierra region exhibits a 64.6% Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), the regional numbers are significantly impacted by the higher LFPR in Mono County (82.4%). The lower rates in Alpine and Inyo Counties likely reflect national trends that show lower labor force participation in areas with indigenous communities, especially those living on reservation lands[9]. For comparison, statewide LFPR in 2023 has hovered around 62.1%, and US LFPR has hovered around 62.6% for the same time period.

County	Civilian, Non-Institutionalized Population (16+ years)	Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)
Alpine	1,137	578	50.8%
Inyo	15,472	8,236	53.2%
Mono	10,773	8,879	82.4%
3-County Region	27,382	17,693	64.6%

Table 4: Labor Force Participation Rates. Source: Lightcast, 2023.Q1.

Unemployment

As Figure 9 demonstrates, unemployment rates across the three counties remained relatively close to one another up to 2019, with Alpine County showing slightly higher unemployment. Inyo County's labor force participation was affected the least by the COVID-19 pandemic.

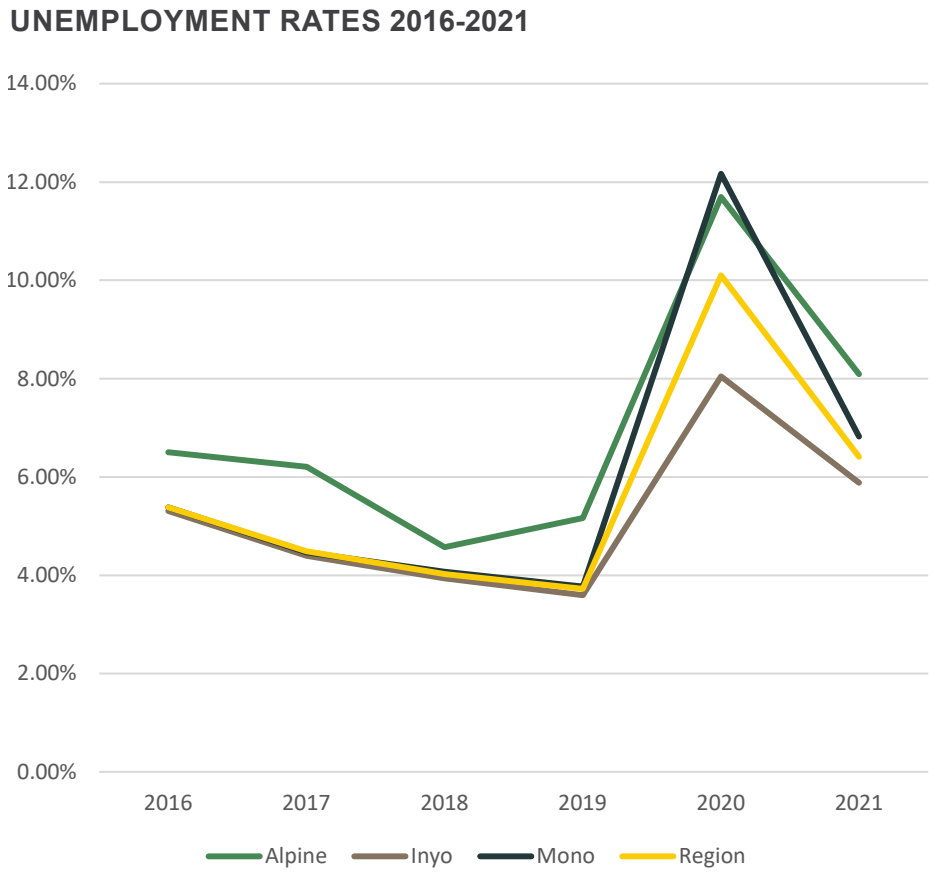


Figure 10: Unemployment Rates 2016-2021. Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates.

9 A 2019 report from the U.S. Bureau of Statistics (BLS) detailed these trends, showing that "American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN) had… a higher unemployment rate, and a lower labor force participation rate than the overall U.S. population. In addition, the unemployment rate was higher for AIANs who lived in an AIAN area—that is, a federal or state American Indiana reservation or off-reservation trust land, tribal statistical area, or Alaska Native village statistical area—than AIANs who lived elsewhere."

Job Opportunities in the Region

Healthcare jobs lead the region in terms of monthly job postings, with administrative, sales, maintenance, management, and food service roles following and closely grouped together. Job postings represent opportunities in a range of industries and occupations, indicating that the region can support residents with diverse and varied skillsets. Of the top occupations in terms of job postings, high levels of educational attainment may not be required, but technical training or some post-secondary education is likely needed to meet job requirements.

Occupation	Unique Average Monthly Postings (Apr 2022 - Mar 2023)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	50
Office and Administrative Support	30
Sales and Related	29
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	29
Management	27
Food Preparation and Serving Related	26

Table 5: Average Monthly Job Postings for Eastern Sierra Region. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.



Educational Attainment Levels

Among Eastern Sierra counties, Mono ranks last in educational attainment levels at the low end, with over 6% of the population never entering high school and another 7% not finishing high school. All three counties rank evenly with nearly a quarter of the population having attended some college but without earning a degree. Alpine County ranks highest among the three with bachelors and graduate degrees.

The region does have some opportunities for its residents to pursue higher education locally through institutions like Cerro Coso Community College in the Kern Community College District. They have campuses in Bishop and Mammoth Lakes in addition to online-only offerings. However, the community college, along with new and existing skills training providers, could be leveraged better to play a more prominent role in the region's economic and workforce development.

County	Less than 9th Grade	Some HS, No Diploma	HS Diploma	Some College, No Degree	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate Degree and Higher
Alpine	3.1%	2.1%	21.0%	24.6%	4.2%	23.3%	21.6%
Inyo	3.1%	4.7%	30.9%	24.5%	9.1%	16.3%	11.4%
Mono	6.3%	7.3%	22.2%	24.7%	10.9%	18.1%	10.4%
Eastern Sierra Region	4.3%	5.6%	27.1%	24.6%	9.6%	17.3%	11.4%
California	8.9%	7.1%	20.7%	20.2%	8.0%	21.7%	13.4%
United States	4.7%	6.2%	26.3%	19.8%	8.8%	20.8%	13.3%

Table 6: Educational Attainment. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.

Infrastructure Assets

Physical infrastructure is an important component to any community, but even more so in the Eastern Sierra region where connectivity is vital to supporting the tourism industry that contributes largely to the region's economy. Safe roads, public transportation networks, air service and more are essential in providing visitors with a seamless and enjoyable experience, encouraging repeat visits, and attracting more tourists to explore the area's abundant natural assets, like those listed earlier.

Highways and Interstates

Major thoroughfares connect the region to surrounding geographies. In Inyo County, US-395 runs North-South, CA-190 runs East-West, CA-127 and CA-178 cross the Southeast corner, and I-168 crosses the Northwest corner. In Mono County, US-395 runs North-South, CA-120 runs East-West, and US-6 crosses the Southeast corner. In Alpine County, CA-4 connects the Southwest and Northeast corners, CA-88 North crosses the Northwest corner, and CA-89 connects CA-4 and CA-88.

Public Transportation

In Alpine County, public transportation options include Alpine County Community Development's Dial-A-Ride program, which operates Monday through Friday from 8am to 9pm to a limited number of destinations in the county and the surrounding areas for a small fee. While Amtrak and Greyhound do not operate directly in Alpine County, some stops outside the county can be accessed by residents via the Dial-A-Ride program.

The Eastern Sierra Transit Authority exists as a joint agency serving Inyo and Mono Counties and provides routes throughout the region accessible from several in-demand locations. Limited ground transportation options exist outside of the region, with routes to Lancaster and Reno running Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays. Expanding and improving access to public transit is a priority for the two counties, as a more robust system could serve indigenous communities and through-hikers as well as facilitate any forced evacuation necessary in response to natural disaster.

Airports

Although no international airports or major commercial airports exist in the region, residents and tourists are mostly served by neighboring Los Angeles International Airport, Reno/Tahoe International Airport, Sacramento International Airport, and Las Vegas Harry Reid International Airport.

The region does contain regional and general aviation airports, including Eastern Sierra Regional Airport in Bishop offering seasonal commercial service to Denver and San Francisco as well as Mammoth Yosemite Regional Airport near Mammoth Lakes. Other general aviation airports include Independence, Lone Pine, Furnace Creek, Trona, Lee Vining, and Bryant.

In 2005, an industrial site feasibility analysis identified potential for a light industrial park/real estate opportunity related to the footprint of the Eastern Sierra Regional Airport in Bishop. Should that project and infrastructure-related needs that would support that project rise to a priority level for planning and funding, this could contribute to economic diversification opportunities for current and future businesses in need of an expanded industrial real estate footprint.



Broadband & Cellular Service

Connectivity in the region is poor compared to federal goals and minimum thresholds for service. Although data about levels of service reported to the FCC by internet service providers is not made publicly available in real time, Form 477 indicates that for much of the region, no provider reports service faster than the minimum threshold to be considered broadband, 25/3mbps.

Speed test results reinforce the level of service providers report, with large portions of the region producing average speed test results below 25/3mbps. Slow speeds are likely the result of legacy technology or wireless infrastructure failing to meet consumers not in close-range.

Poor broadband and cellular connection impact quality of life and economic opportunities for residents, but it also poses a threat in terms of emergency response and public safety. Gaps in cellular connection regionwide make emergency communication challenging for those who may be in need of immediate assistance, and those who may be responding.

Although existing service is less than adequate to meet the needs of residents relying on broadband connectivity for work, school, or leisure, a significant fiber backbone exists in the region as a resource for potential network expansion. Regional officials are currently engaging providers to discuss potential buildout from existing infrastructure.

Important state investments in broadband are incoming through California Senate Bill 156, which was signed into law in July of 2021. The bill has allocated roughly $6 billion for the construction of a statewide open access middle-mile network, some last mile infrastructure, a loan loss reserve for local governments, and local technical assistance grants. Engagement throughout planning and last-mile allocations could help to close existing broadband gaps across the region.

In addition to California SB 156, it was announced in June 2023 that the State of California will receive approximately $1.86 billion in funding from the federal Broadband, Equity, Accessibility, and Deployment (BEAD) grant program, created to ensure all Americans can access affordable, accessible, and reliable high-speed internet service by 2030. This is an important advocacy opportunity for the region to ensure the region receives a fair share of California’s BEAD funds to improve high-speed internet access for residents and businesses.

Regional Environmental Considerations

Alpine County was founded at the onset of the discovery of silver deposits in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and since its formation residents have celebrated the beauty of the landscape and the natural resources present while simultaneously recognizing the natural hazards and conservation needs that accompany the landscape. The county is 96% public land, and residents and local officials are invested in preserving the natural assets present.

Mono County, with arid valleys alternating between Eastern Sierran peaks, was also formed at the onset of the discovery of natural resources in the area. The gold rush attracted thousands of new residents, some of whom continued to stay and ranch or engage in other enterprise after mining for gold was no longer lucrative. Roughly 94% of Mono County is publicly owned.

Inyo County also contains arid valleys and tall peaks, with silver mines originally drawing settlers to the area. Those originally drawn to the area to mine silver expanded to salt, tungsten, and borax. Mining was lucrative throughout the early 1900s, with ranching activity also popular among settlers. Roughly 98% of Inyo County is publicly owned.



Energy Supply

Alpine County

Alpine County Residents receive energy from providers Liberty Utilities, Pacific Gas & Electric, and Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District. Power lines supply energy to county residents and businesses, but the lines are especially vulnerable due to the environmental extremes the area experiences. Historically, high winds, severe thunderstorms, wildfires, public safety power shutoffs, and winter storms have been the main causes of electrical utility loss in Alpine County. The fragmented water and wastewater utility provision in the county stands to be uniquely affected by power outages, as many do not have backup generators per the county's 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan[10].

Mono County

Privately-owned Southern California Edison serves the Town of Mammoth Lakes and most of Mono County. Unincorporated Coleville and Walker are served by Liberty Utilities, and the southeastern tip of the county is served by member-owned Valley Electric Transmission. The county is primarily served by two main transmission lines and 13 substations, and failure or disruption of a line or substation due to natural hazards or equipment malfunction is a more-frequent countywide disruption.

Inyo County

Three agencies provide electricity to Inyo County: Southern California Edison serves most of the county, and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and The Valley Electric Association serve some smaller communities. The county has 17 power plants, 14 hydroelectric facilities, and three geothermal power plants. The county has two major power lines and 25 substations, which must remain secure in order to prevent outages.



10 Alpine County Hazard Mitigation Plan Page 5-11

Water Quality & Supply

Aging infrastructure and environmental hazards may threaten water quality for humans and for wildlife. Regionally, provision of water is fragmented and relies on several small suppliers with limited resources and communication. Additionally, many residents rely on private wells and septic systems for their daily water supply. Hazard mitigation strategies focus on preserving water resources and ensuring the resilience of water infrastructure.

Much of the region's land is owned by the City of Los Angeles and is restricted for use as an important watershed for the city. This extreme restriction on land use within the region for the benefit of communities outside the region has been a topic of contention politically and has contributed to the extremely limited land that is available to the region for development.

Alpine County

A few public utility districts operate or provide water services in Alpine County, including Bear Valley Water District, Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District, Markleeville Public Utility District, South Tahoe Public Utility District, and Washoe Utility Management Authority. Private utility companies Lake Alpine Water Company, Markleeville Water Company, and Woodfords Mutual Water Company also provide water and wastewater services to consumers.

Mono County

Largely unincorporated Mono County is supplied through a number of special districts tapping into groundwater wells. Other areas rely on private wells and septic systems for their water supply. Although Mono Lake exists in the region as a significant resource, the LADWP diverts water that previously flowed into the lake and has rights to the surface water as part of a controversial purchase.

Inyo County

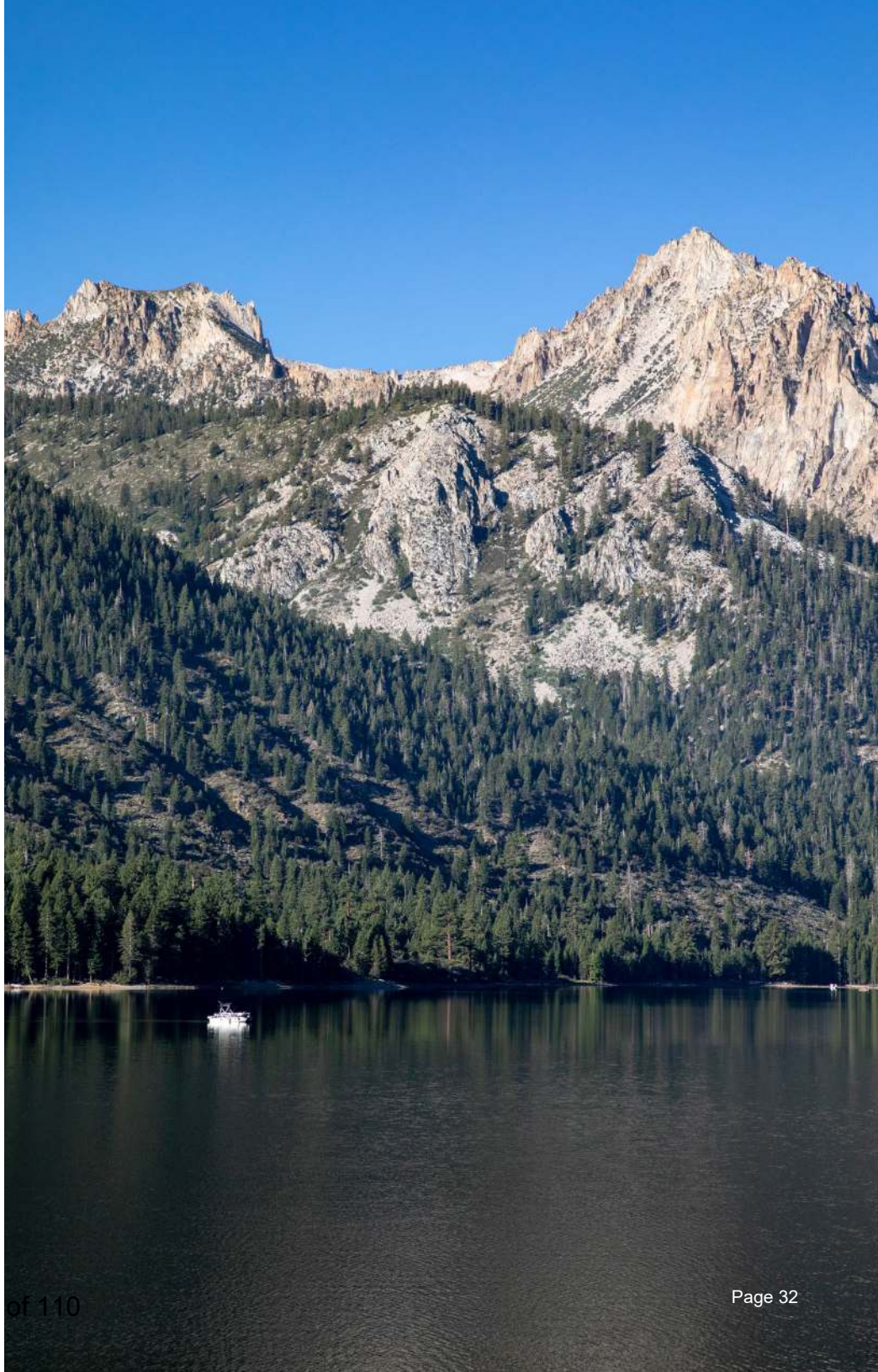
Similar to Mono County, a controversial purchase by the City of Los Angeles limits the water resources that county residents can access. Los Angeles purchased water rights to the Owens River and diverts almost all of the water through an aqueduct. Many water systems exist in the county relying on groundwater and surface water.

Air Quality

Wildland fires pose the biggest threat to air quality in the region. Residents must remain alert to air quality reports when in proximity to a wildland fire, as it can take weeks for smoke and fire-related particulates to clear.

Recent wildland fire seasons have run longer than anticipated and resulted in air quality alerts to the Eastern Sierra from the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Board. Sensitive groups including those with respiratory illnesses must be especially cautious in response to these alerts.

The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Board also highlights the emptied Owens Lakebed[11], from which water was diverted to the City of Los Angeles in 1913, as one of the largest sources of particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter, known to cause health problems when inhaled. The particulate matter affects those living up to, and in some cases exceeding, 50 miles from the lakebed, and mitigation efforts have been focused on the area, but dangerous particulate matter still remains.



11 Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District – Owens Lake

Climate Change & Hazard Mitigation

Climate change is expected to exacerbate existing hazards in the region and to contribute to increased frequency and extremity of natural disasters including wildland fires, drought, dam vulnerability, and more.

Existing hazard mitigation plans were developed prior to 2020 and chose not to profile the hazard type “Epidemic,” as no recent or historic events had occurred at the time. Soon after, COVID-19 interrupted all parts of daily life, guaranteeing that future planning efforts will include considerations for similar situations.

All counties elected to assess the risk level of various hazards using slightly different frameworks and methodologies. Hazard profiles included below may lack uniformity but reflect the decisions and priorities of local leaders.

Alpine County

Alpine County’s hazard mitigation plan profiles 10 hazards:

Hazard	Risk Level
Communication/Utility Loss	High
Drought	High
Severe Weather	High
Wildland Fire	High
Earthquake	Moderate
Flood	Moderate
Hazardous Material Event	Moderate
Landslide	Moderate
Avalanche	Low
Dam Failure	Low

Table 7: Alpine County Hazard Classification. Source: Alpine County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Nature, location, extent, and probability of future events are discussed for each hazard. After extensive profiling, strategies and recommendations were developed to reduce the possibility of damage and losses due to each hazard. Goals include expanding existing avalanche warning systems, updating ordinances pertaining to septic system maintenance, reviewing and retrofitting county buildings and schools to withstand earthquake events, increasing capacity of drainage systems, and adopting a County grading ordinance. The plan also recommends that a feasibility study be conducted to determine whether a biomass-to-bioenergy facility is viable in the county.

Mono County

Mono County’s hazard mitigation plan profiles 12 hazards:

Hazard	Risk Level (1-4)
Wildfire	3.4
Severe Winter Weather & Snow	3.2
Earthquake & Seismic Hazards	2.9
Volcano	2.8
Climate Change	2.8
Drought	2.6
Severe Wind	2.4
Flood	2.3
Landslide	2.2
Avalanche	2.1
Dam Failure	2.0
Hazardous Materials	1.9
Disease/Pest Management	1.6

Table 8: Mono County Hazard Classification. Source: Mono County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Each hazard is discussed in terms of hazard level, hazard history, and likely impacted locations. Risk is also discussed in terms of likelihood and land ownership. Measures recommended to mitigate hazards include improving cell and radio coverage, considering the creation of additional emergency access routes, requiring newly designed structures to be retrofitted to withstand priority hazards, developing a grant program to ensure building exteriors can become code-compliant, maintaining a list of isolated and vulnerable residents who may require special emergency response services, and acquiring properties in avalanche zones.

Inyo County

Inyo County's hazard mitigation plan profiles 10 hazards:

Hazard	Risk Level
Drought	High
Flood	High
Seismic Hazards	High
Severe Weather	High
Wildfire	High
Avalanche	Medium
Dam or Aqueduct Failure	Medium
Disease/Pest Management	Medium
Geological Hazards	Medium
Hazardous Materials	Medium

Table 9: Inyo County Hazard Classification. Source: Inyo County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Hazards are discussed in terms of history, impacts, locations, extent, future risk, and climate change considerations. Actions for mitigation include improving telecommunication infrastructure, informing residents of potential hazards, restricting access to avalanche-prone areas, encouraging the use of pest-resistant vegetation in landscaping projects, exploring opportunities to diversify water sources, and requiring new development to occur outside of fault rupture hazard zones.



Regional Economic Overview

The region's economy is supported by a robust and diverse outdoor tourism and recreation sector, with Government and Accommodation and Food Services appearing as top industries in terms of number of jobs, location quotient, and competitive effect. The success of these industries can be attributed to the diverse and largely publicly owned natural assets that drive outdoor recreation and tourism across the region.

Government, manufacturing, and utilities are also notable components of the region's economic fabric. Government activity makes up a large portion of the region's jobs and economic activity. The sector is amplified by the National Park Service, National Forest Service, and other federally owned and maintained land. Manufacturing also accounts for a large number of jobs and share of economic output, primarily in beverage and tobacco products (categorized as a single sub-industry at this level of analysis) as well as wood products and electronics. Utilities account for about 110 jobs in the region, which is notable relative to population size and contributes to a high location quotient.

Top Industries

The region's top industries when examining 2-digit NAICS codes enforce the importance of government jobs, which include roles at all levels of government, but excludes public schools and hospitals. Accommodation and food services in addition to retail trade follow Government at key employers in the region and indicate the importance of tourism to the region's economy.

TOP INDUSTRIES BY 2021 JOBS

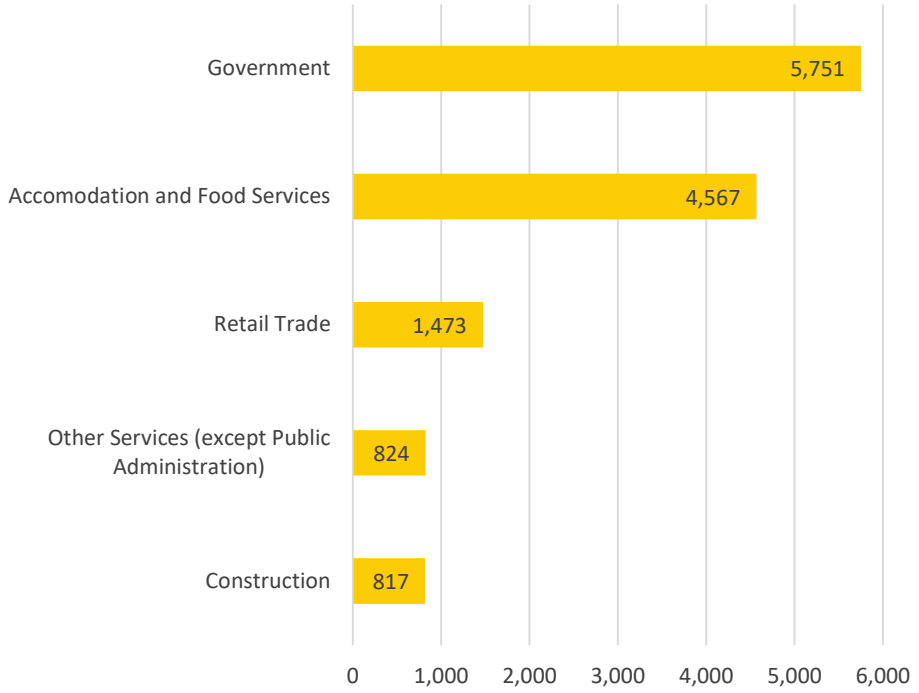


Figure 12: Top Regional Industries by Job Count. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.

Top Growing Industries

By number of jobs, the Accommodation and Food Services industry was the top growing industry in the region from 2017 to 2022. The estimated 100-job growth only represents a 4% increase for the already robust industry, a lower rate of growth than smaller industries included. It should also be noted that the Accommodation and Food Services industry has the lowest wages and highest location quotient of all industries on the list below, with average annual earnings of $39,624 (the only top growing industry with average annual earnings below $50,000) and a location quotient of 3.82 (the only top growing industry to exceed a location quotient of 1).

The agriculture industry has been a focus of regional leaders and elected officials, with a 2020 report outlining opportunities in Mono and Inyo counties. The report outlines the economic impact of the agriculture industry and emerging opportunities for the region, solidifying the industry as a promising field for growth and development.

It must also be noted that growth in certain industries is limited by land availability, given that the majority of the region's land is not privately owned. Interfacing with the agencies responsible for maintaining the region's vast supply of publicly owned land will be a critical step in any industry expansion.

NAICS Code	Industry	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs
72	Accommodation and Food Services	4,935	5,143	207	4%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	307	408	100	33%
31	Manufacturing	361	454	93	26%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	468	555	86	18%
23	Construction	766	790	24	3%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	71	87	16	23%
61	Educational Services	95	105	10	11%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	96	101	5	6%

Table 10: Top Growing Industries in the Eastern Sierra Region, Lightcast 2023

Top Occupations

Regional top occupations include jobs in industries related to tourism and hospitality, with retail, food service, and facilities jobs represented as a sizeable share of the top spots. Healthcare occupations also appear on the list, re-enforcing the importance of the healthcare industry as hospitals also include two of the region's largest employers. The presence of protective service jobs in the region's top occupations indicates again the importance of government-supported positions and mostly include public safety and first-responder positions.

TOP OCCUPATIONS

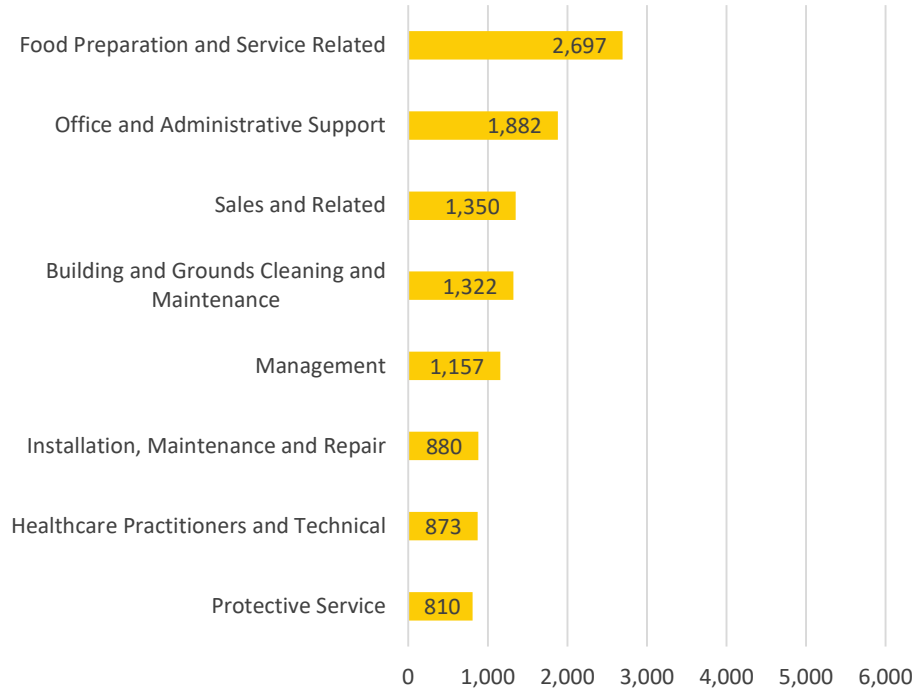


Figure 13: Eastern Sierra Top Occupations by Job Count. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.

Wages and historic growth in the region's top industries can help to paint a complete picture of the workforce and economic conditions that the region must manage. Of the leading eight occupations, the top three have shed jobs in the past five years, and the following five have added jobs. Jobs loss data in food service, and to a lesser extent, sales, likely is still reflecting pandemic-era job shocks in these industries. Growth in the remaining top industries contribute to a modest total job growth of 266, a reflection of the region's stable population size in recent years.

Of the region's top eight occupations, only three typically support wages adequate to support cost of living in most scenarios. Individuals with children or without a working partner may struggle to manage expenses while working in food service, facilities, sales, and potentially office and administrative work or maintenance and repair work.

Occupation	Growth	Wages
Food Preparation and Serving Related	-416	$15.86
Office and Administrative Support	-214	$20.01
Sales and Related	-84	$15.92
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	+96	$16.27
Management	+282	$40.98
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	+85	$23.62
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	+73	$49.33
Protective Service	+29	$30.49

Table 11: Eastern Sierra Job Growth. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.

Regional Industry Clusters

In Table 12, the region's top industry clusters are displayed in terms of job count, including their projected growth over a ten-year period from 2018 to 2028 and the average annual earnings per job within the industry. Average earnings significantly above the regional average of $64,913 are presented in green and those significantly lower are presented in red.

In general, most workers in the Eastern Sierra region are employed by local governments. Food service and accommodation industries employ roughly 5,200 workers, with the food industry projected to continue to grow significantly in the years to come. Jobs in these industry clusters make significantly less than the average earnings in the region and workers in these jobs are likely to struggle to meet the area's cost of living.

Industry (3-Digit NAICS Code)	2022 Jobs	2018-2028 % Job Growth	Avg. Earnings Per Job
Local Government (903)	4,018	7%	$95,669
Food Services and Drinking Places (722)	2,791	60%	$34,264
Accommodation (721)	2,476	6%	$48,293
Federal Government (901)	936	-17%	$87,168
Specialty Trade Contractors (238)	546	39%	$61,820
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries (713)	486	1%	$46,102
State Government (902)	449	16%	$113,622
Real Estate (531)	401	-6%	$61,130

Table 12: Eastern Sierra Top Industries Trends. Source: Lightcast Q1.2023.

Commuting Patterns

Table 13 displays commuting data from two vantage points: where workers live and where workers work. The top half of the table displays the percentage of resident workers (those who live in the region and have jobs) who work in the region and the percentage of those who work outside of the region. As the table shows, nearly 50% of the resident workforce leaves the three-county area for their jobs. Many of these workers are commuting to the larger metropolitan regions of San Francisco, Sacramento, Fresno, San Jose, and Bakersfield as well as neighboring Douglas County in Nevada and around Lake Tahoe[12]. Out of state employment destinations include Reno and Las Vegas markets.

Within the region, the largest employment centers are in Bishop (19.2% of Eastern Sierra's resident workers) and Mammoth Lakes (14.7%). 64.3% of all jobs in the region are held by residents. However, only 54.9% of Eastern Sierra resident workers hold jobs in the region itself, whereas 45.1% of resident workers leave the region for their jobs.

	Work in Eastern Sierra	Work Outside of Eastern Sierra
Workers **Living** in Eastern Sierra Region	54.9%	45.1%
	Live in Eastern Sierra	**Live Outside of Eastern Sierra**
Workers **Employed** in Eastern Sierra Region	64.3%	35.7%

Table 13: Where Eastern Sierra Workers Live and Work. Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap.

12 2020 Commuting estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap website.

Figure 14 depicts the net commuting patterns for the three-county region. As a whole, the Eastern Sierra region is experiencing a net negative as more people are leaving the region for their jobs than are entering it. An estimated 5,140 residents both live and work in the region, while 4,853 residents commute outside of the region to work, and 3,741 residents commute into the region to work. Neighboring counties vary in this measure, with some counties (ex: Fresno) retaining of drawing more workers for employment, while other counties (ex: Amador) have a residential population that tends to commute outside of the county for work.

These commuting patterns would suggest that many Eastern Sierra residents are seeking jobs outside of the region. As was mentioned earlier in the report, two of the Eastern Sierra counties show a low Labor Force Participation Rate, suggesting that even those residents who are employed are having to look outside of the region for either type of occupation or higher wages.

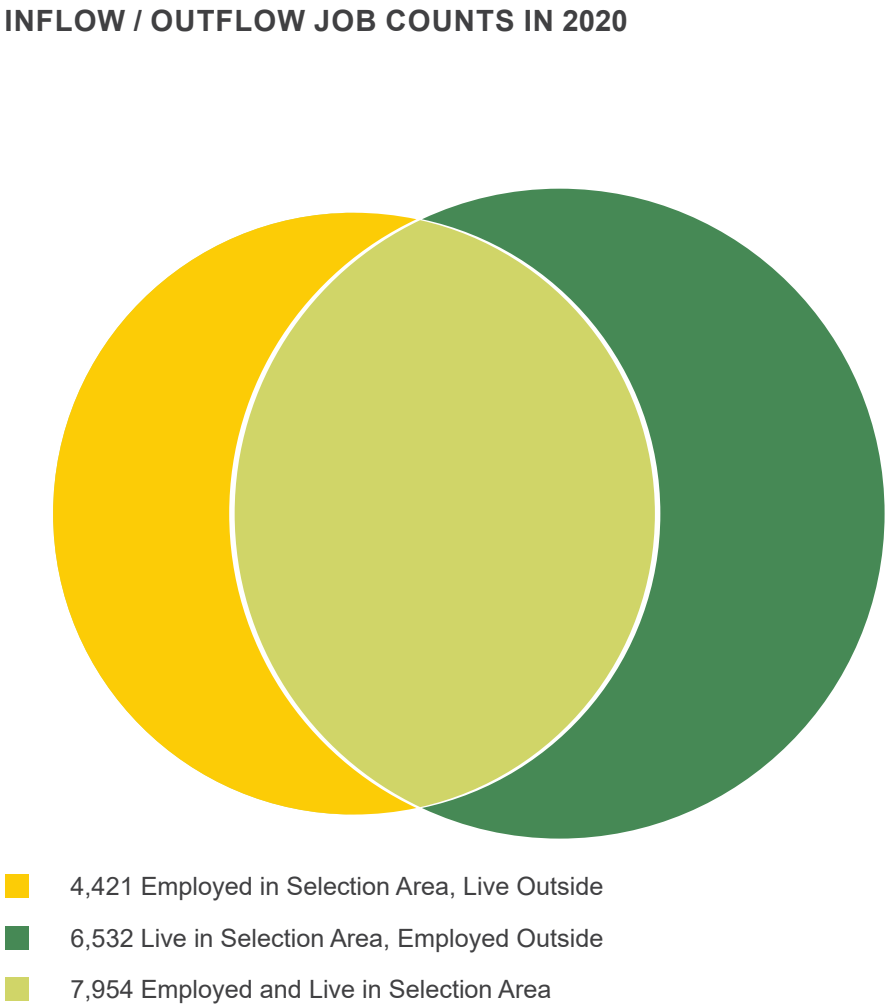


Figure 14: Eastern Sierra Commuting Patterns. Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap

Economic Resiliency

Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity. Often, the shocks/ disruptions to the economic base of an area or region are manifested in three ways[13]:

- Downturns or other significant events in the national or international economy which impact demand for locally produced goods and consumer spending;
- Downturns in particular industries that constitute a critical component of the region's economic activity; and/or
- Other external shocks (a natural or man-made disaster, closure of a military base, exit of a major employer, the impacts of climate change, etc.).

A focus on resiliency and recovery has become a global focus, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Negative impacts from an economic disaster or event, either natural or manmade, will require some immediate action on the community's part to minimize any threats to future economic challenges. Too often, communities are unprepared for the devastation and destruction that is likely to come post-disaster. By preparing for foreseen economic shocks, communities can endure these situations, and take steps toward long-term recovery.

Establishing Information Networks and Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning

In February 2023, the EDA incorporated "Establishing Information Networks" and "Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning" to enhance a region's ability to address economic resiliency. Because economic development organizations tend to serve as response mechanisms in economic recovery, the region should establish systems to facilitate active and regular communication between the relevant sectors to collaborate on common challenges. This may include standing meetings, a task force, or any format that meets the needs and context of the community. Additionally, regions that are prone to natural disasters have engaged in resilience planning by focusing on the development of disaster recovery strategies, integrated with economic development strategies.

Plans and resources exist at the local/county level to assist with disaster preparedness and response, and there is great opportunity to further enhance planning for disaster recovery across the entire region. Alpine County adopted a Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2018. Inyo County has an Office of Emergency Services with an Emergency Operations Plan and communications to support residents making a disaster preparedness plan. Mono County also has an Office of Emergency Services with a "READY Mono" communications initiative. The Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance exists to coordinate stakeholders in Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties to address risks and challenges from the threat of wildfires.

13 U.S. Economic Development Administration

SWOT Analysis

SWOT Process

In April of 2023, stakeholders across the Eastern Sierra region in Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties were invited to participate in one of six engagement workshops over four days. Five workshops were held in person across the region, while one was held virtually to offer a better opportunity for stakeholders in the western part of Alpine County.

These sessions were interactive for participants, introducing the regional background data compiled in advance as well as time spent identifying regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Participants were given time for individual brainstorming and reflection but spent substantial time in group discussion to rank top SWOT items. All information was collected via a workshop handout as well as on Post-it Notes and note cards.

SWOT session results recorded on note cards were then coded twice, resulting in six key themes used for analysis and to inform the strategic framework of the CEDS. Every item listed as a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat was categorized into one of the following themes, and analysis was performed across themes, SWOT items, and geography.

Following the review of information from the interactive workshop sessions, an online survey was distributed to seek additional feedback from the greater community. The survey yielded 670 responses (22 in Alpine County, 359 in Inyo County, and 289 in Mono County), and the results are incorporated into the SWOT analysis.

It is important to note that participation from tribal communities was extremely limited. Including tribal communities in the CEDS development process was very important to the steering committee, but this proved to be very difficult. Relationships between tribal leaders and community entities have significant room to grow in strength, including asking tribal leaders what forms of engagement and communication best meet their needs.

Input from stakeholder engagement sessions resulted in the identification of six themes determined to be critical to the region's economic success. The pie charts on the following pages depict the types of items, elements, and sub-themes that comprise each focus area. These items may have been discussed in any context (a regional asset, a deficiency, etc.), but were included as parts of any one of six overarching themes.

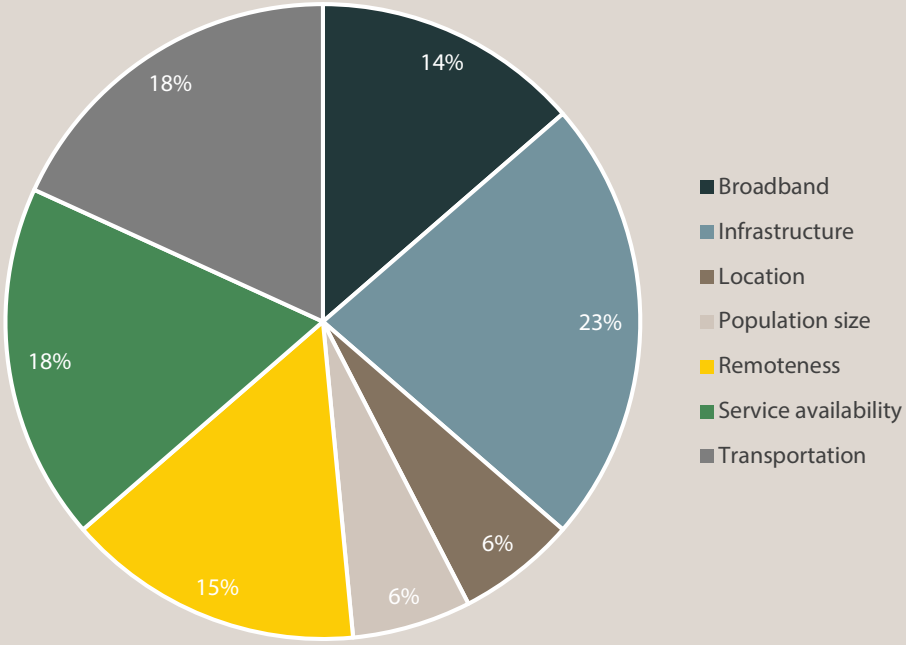
Theme 1: Access & Connectivity

From roadways to broadband to air travel, the importance of connectivity was a focus in stakeholder sessions and is supported by regional data and literature. Access and connectivity include inter-regional travel and access for both essential services and leisure, as well as the region's level of connectivity with the surrounding state and nation. Strategic actions towards improving regional access and connectivity will contribute to the region's economic diversity and vitality.

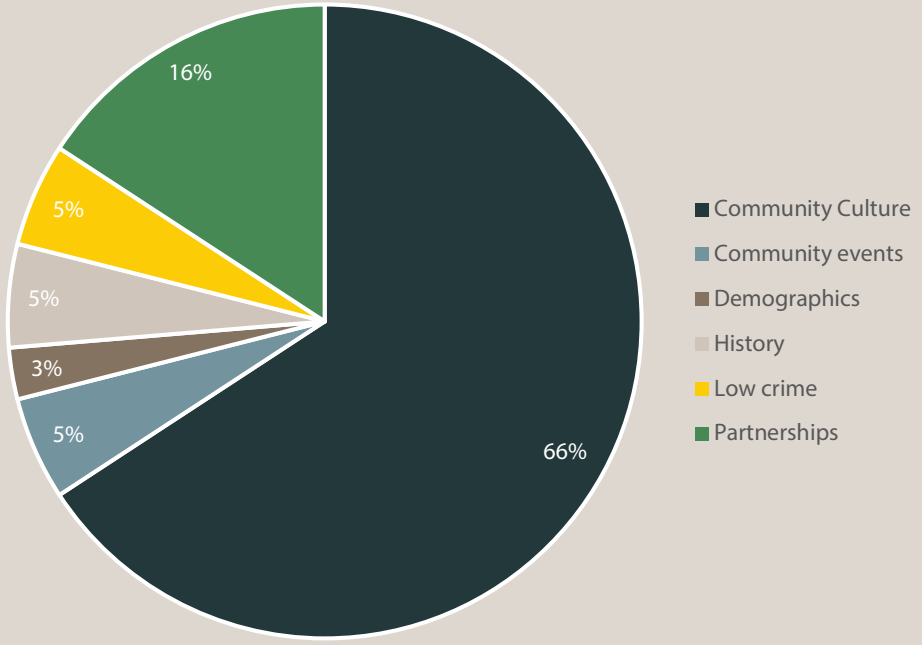
Theme 2: Community & Culture

Many participants in workshops as well as survey respondents indicated that community and culture made the Eastern Sierra region appealing, while also slightly contributing to some of its weaknesses in terms of population size. Individuals expressed a strong desire for the small-town culture of individual communities in the region to remain strong even as opportunities for economic growth are pursued. This category also includes elements of historic preservation, quality of life, low crime rates, and opportunities for improved partnerships.

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY



COMMUNITY & CULTURE



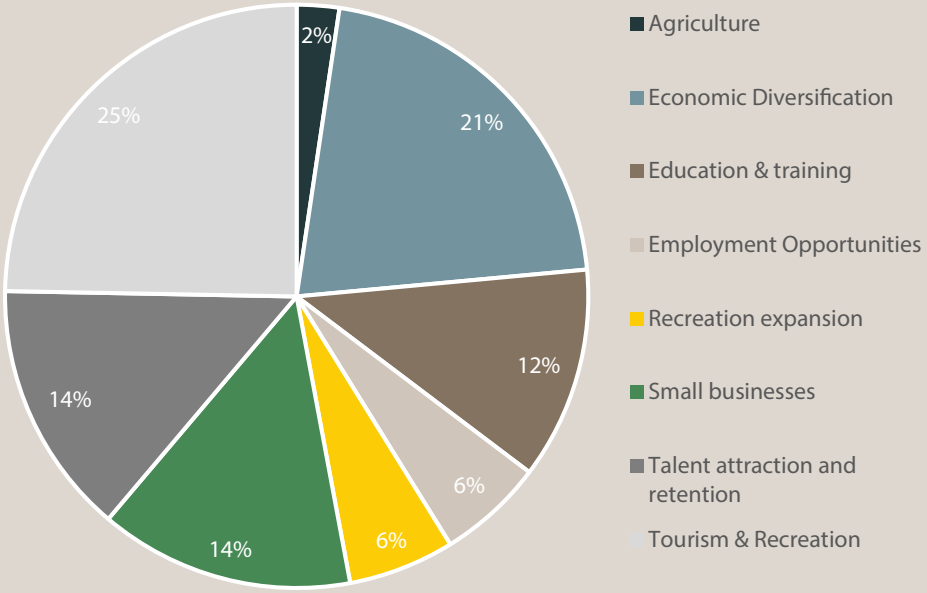
Theme 3: Economic Expansion & Diversification

With the undisputed asset of a healthy outdoor recreation and tourist economy, regional leaders want to leverage the industry's benefits for economic growth while seeking opportunities for economic diversification in pursuit of increased economic resiliency. The Eastern Sierra region has the opportunity to determine current and future needs of existing businesses and develop programs and policies to address those needs. This can lead to employment growth through business expansion and industry diversification by encouraging business growth that aligns with regional strengths and opportunities.

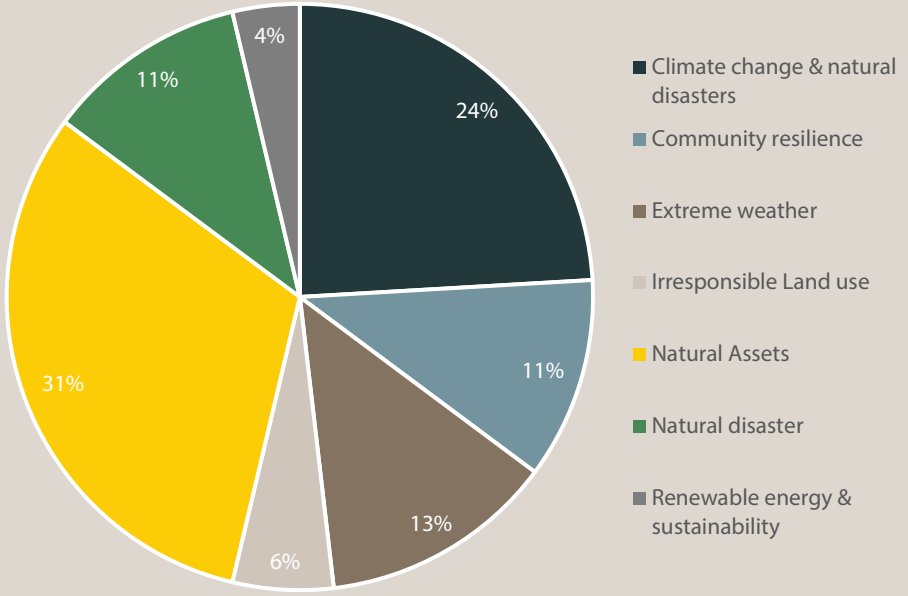
Theme 4: Environmental Resilience & Sustainability

With a robust inventory of natural assets to protect, frequent exposure to natural hazards, and a population accustomed to persevering and "bouncing back," environmental resilience and sustainability was discussed across SWOT components. The Eastern Sierra's key economic strengths are inextricably tied to the protection of the region's natural assets, making much of the conversation around Environmental Resilience and Sustainability about emergency preparedness, hazard mitigation, and threat minimization.

ECONOMIC EXPANSION & DIVERSIFICATION



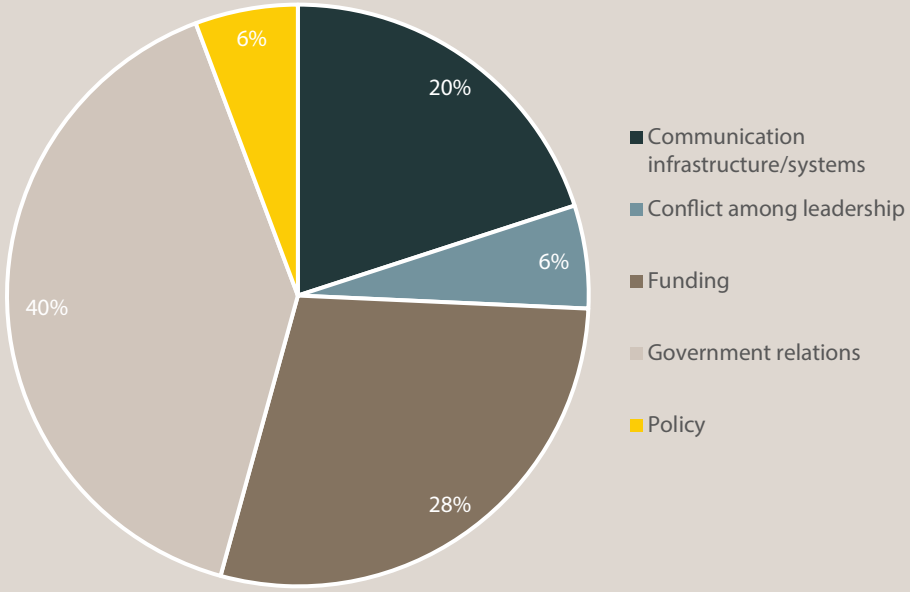
ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY



Theme 5: Government Affairs & Advocacy

Although government affairs and advocacy was the smallest theme to emerge, the regional policy landscape, and the networks and communication occurring within it, emerged as an important piece of both the SWOT and the CEDS strategic framework. Regional collaboration is an important piece of strategy implementation and essential to pursue promising state and federal funding opportunities. Strengths related to this theme included the strong relationships and knowledge that local government leaders have with and about their communities. Weaknesses and threats included a lack of mobilization towards funding opportunities due to lack of knowledge or capacity, and perceived limited communication with neighboring municipalities.

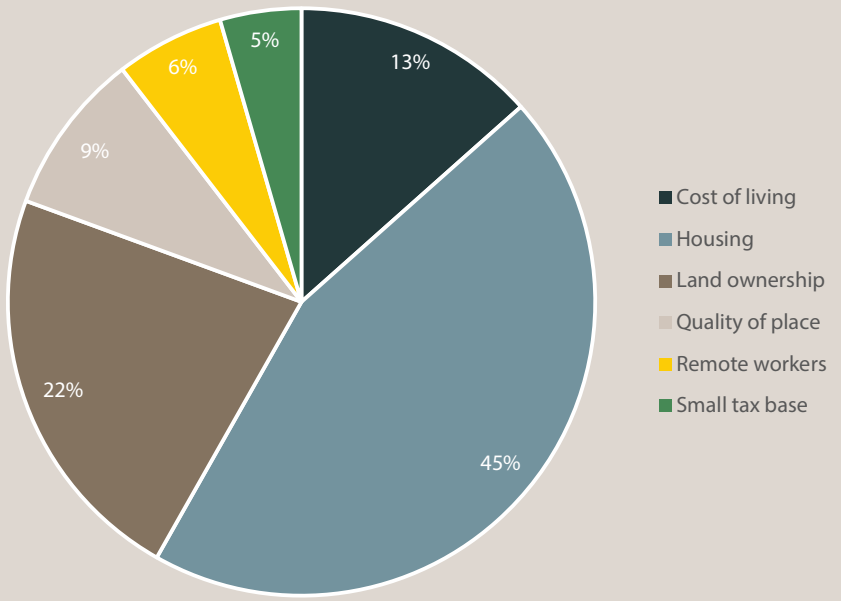
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & ADVOCACY



Theme 6: Housing Availability & Land Use

The extremely limited supply of privately owned land within the region colored the discussion around housing and land use, with stakeholders frustrated by rising housing costs and lack of opportunities for development. These constraints, stakeholders say, also limit population growth and in turn limit the size of the region's economic base. Some opportunities were raised to access land owned by the City of Los Angeles, although optimism regarding suggested opportunities was not high. Infill development and main street/downtown corridor investments were discussed as opportunities across the region, while second-home ownership was identified as a potential threat.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY & LAND USE



Regional Strengths

Connection to Community

Due to the size and geographic location of many of the communities in the Eastern Sierra region, residents experience close connection to the community. Due to the rural nature of the area, the region was characterized as a place with vibrant civic life, low crime, and genuine care for neighbors and other members of the community who live, work, and recreate in the area.

Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Industry

Residents and visitors of the region can enjoy an abundance of outdoor recreation activities. Diverse options for recreation appeal to a wide base of people. Tourism consistently drives traffic into the communities in each county, providing a mostly dependable source of revenue for the businesses in these small towns and driving the economy in a large way.

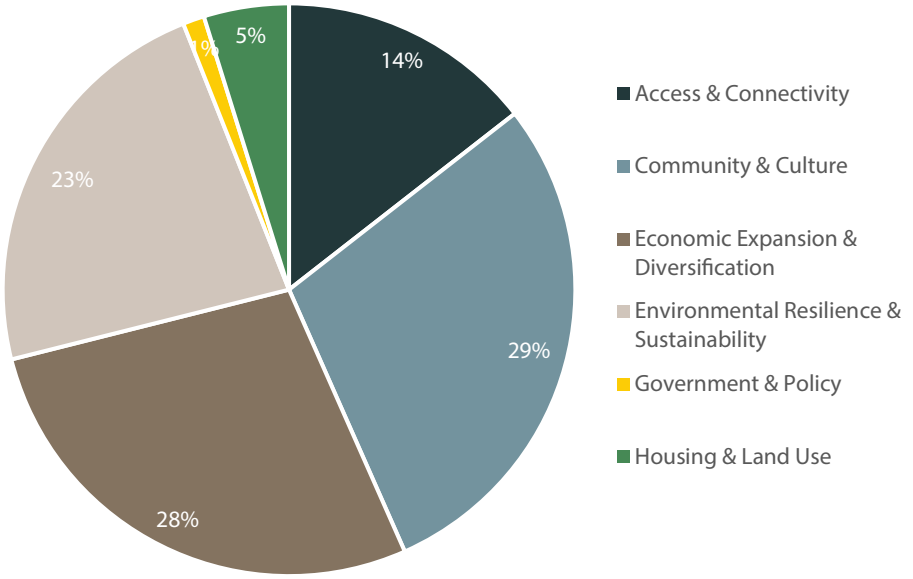
Community Resilience

In the face of positive and negative changes, the communities in the region demonstrate great determination. Their individual and community resilience allows them to withstand many of the natural disasters and climate-related effects that threaten them.

Natural Assets

The natural beauty in the outdoors is apparent in the Eastern Sierra region, making it an attractive place to spend time as a resident, worker, or visitor. This is a unique resource and competitive advantage compared to other communities. The region's preserved natural assets also play into what makes the region environmentally healthy with cleaner air and water.

STRENGTHS



This pie chart represents the extent to which each focus area, described above, was included in stakeholders' discussions of regional strengths.

Regional Weaknesses

Housing

A lack of available and affordable housing stymies the region's ability to flourish with a thriving workforce and economy. With the limited housing stock and limitations to develop more, competition is steep and out-prices workers who are employed in the Eastern Sierra region, many of whom are working in the hospitality and tourism industries with lower wages.

Land Ownership

The lack of private land for development contributes to many of the communities' challenges. Over 95% of the land is publicly owned by the City of Los Angeles, state, and federal government agencies. This negatively affects economic growth as it restricts the establishment of new businesses and expansion of existing ones and impedes job creation and entrepreneurial endeavors.

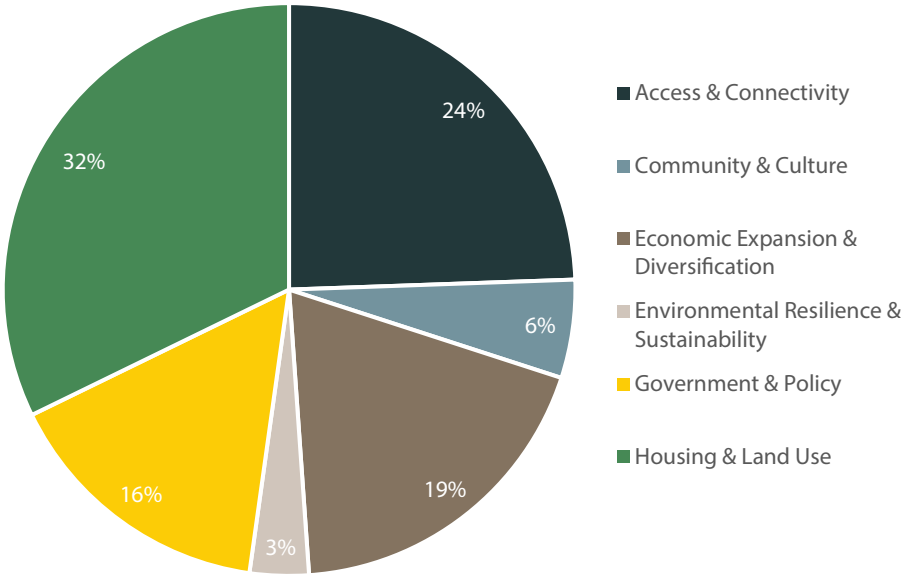
Talent Attraction & Retention

Communities in the Eastern Sierra face challenges in filling jobs with qualified candidates. There is not a large workforce base to pull talent from due to a small and aging population. Additionally, retaining good workers is difficult with a shortage of homes and generally high cost of living.

Remoteness

The remote towns and cities of the Eastern Sierra region face challenges related to that geographical reality. Remoteness negatively affects what public and private services and amenities are available to residents. Stakeholder engagement sessions and the regional survey indicated challenges in providing basic amenities like healthcare, quality childcare and early childhood education, as well as fresh food. These issues are compounded when natural or climate disasters limit accessibility within the region during periods of the year.

WEAKNESSES



This pie chart represents the extent to which each focus area, described above, was included in stakeholders' discussions of regional weaknesses.

Regional Opportunities

Housing & Infrastructure

Updating existing housing and infrastructure as well as developing additional housing to meet the high demand within the region's communities was identified as a major opportunity during the stakeholder engagement process. Within this general opportunity was the identification of a need to develop more workforce, affordable housing to to better support low to middle income earners.

Education & Entrepreneurship

The region will benefit from growing the development of high-quality education and occupational trainings for relevant industries, digital literacy efforts, and coordinated resources for small businesses. Existing institutions like Cerro Coso Community College have limited offerings for students, and those may not match the labor market for the major employers and key industries in the region. Stakeholders believe there is opportunity for better coordination between education systems and businesses to create entry points and pathways to quality jobs and careers in high growing sectors.

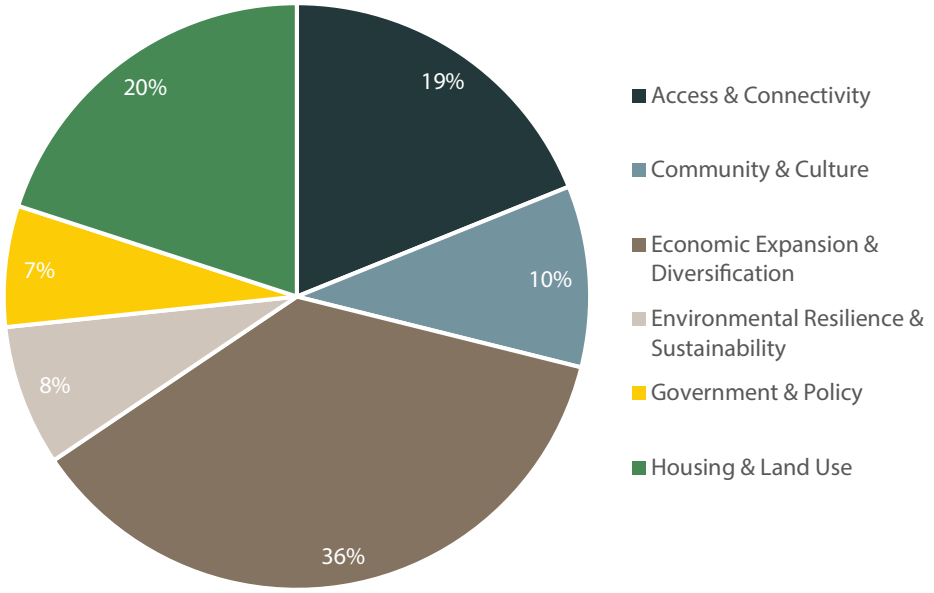
Industry Diversification

Communities expressed the need to diversify the regional economy with investments in industries outside of hospitality and tourism as well as optimizing those existing core sectors, leveraging the region's abundant agricultural resources, exploring options to bring in new technology industries, and increasing outdoor recreation and tourism activities year-round.

Transportation

With the buildout of the Bishop Airport, stakeholders identified the opportunity for expanded air service with more airlines, routes, and year-round air service. To accommodate more visitors in the region, it is also an opportunity to build out more ground transit regionally to simplify travel in each of the counties.

OPPORTUNITIES



This pie chart represents the extent to which each focus area, described above, was included in stakeholders' discussions of regional opportunities.

Regional Threats

Climate Change & Natural Disaster

The impact of changing climates and regular natural disasters consistently threatens the region. Fire damages natural assets and infrastructure, floods remove access to basic services, and climate extremes including severe winter weather make economic activity unpredictable in many communities.

Infrastructure

Buildings that are aging, unoccupied, or even failing make some of the region's communities appear less attractive to visitors and residents, especially in main street/downtown commercial corridors that must remain vibrant for quality of life, tourism, and business development. This is a threat to future growth and community safety the longer it is not redeveloped or improved.

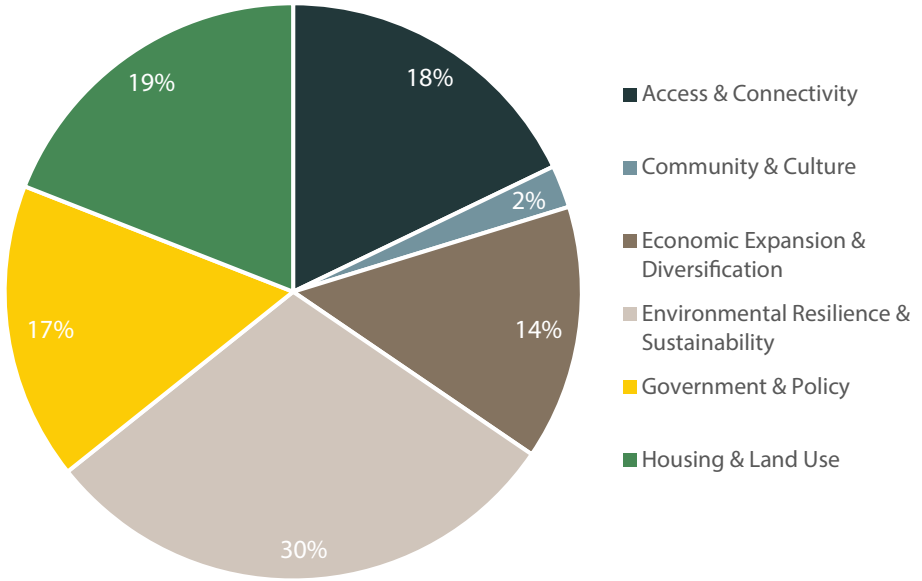
Government Relations

Difficulties engaging state and federal agencies to support community needs are compounded by threats like staff (and point-of-contact) turnover and apathy towards the desires of the community for change. Additionally, it is important that communities avoid dependency on these government agencies to drive forward the initiatives and strategies for economic development and growth.

Cost of Living

Rising costs of living threaten economic growth in the region. This can aggravate existing challenges including housing supply shortages, heavy reliance on recreation and tourism industries that house low-wage employment opportunities, barriers to home ownership, barriers to travel throughout the region, limited opportunities locally to pursue higher education and skills training beyond secondary education, and more.

THREATS



This pie chart represents the extent to which each focus area, described above, was included in stakeholders' discussions of regional threats.

Strategic Action Plan & Evaluation Framework

This section synthesizes the background information about the Eastern Sierra region, the rich insights and feedback gained during stakeholder engagement activities, and a collaboratively derived vision for the future of the region. These inputs were used to determine actionable areas of priority for the region with specific, measurable objectives, steps, or initiatives.

Vision Statement

The core stakeholder committee for the Eastern Sierra CEDS participated in several facilitated sessions to develop and refine the vision statement, which was shared and validated during stakeholder engagement activities. The vision statement served as the focal point for determining and developing key themes that serve as the foundation for the plan's goals and objectives.

The Eastern Sierra region envisions a future which includes economic prosperity and environmental stewardship realized through collaborative efforts to preserve natural assets and historic culture, enhance regional connectivity and resiliency, and advance vibrant and inclusive communities.

Of note is how stakeholders chose to incorporate resiliency into the vision statement. As shared in the SWOT portion of the process and confirmed repeatedly through additional stakeholder engagement, economic and environmental resiliency is of great importance to the region through multiple lenses.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives that inform the action plan incorporate all foundational elements of the CEDS development process: data gathering and fact-finding, regional background, stakeholder engagement, and SWOT analysis.

The following focus areas were identified through the research and engagement processes and used to define and prioritize goals and objectives:

- Access & Connectivity
- Community & Culture
- Economic Expansion & Diversification
- Environmental Resilience & Sustainability
- Government Affairs & Advocacy
- Housing Availability & Land Use

Access & Connectivity

From roadways to broadband to air travel, the importance of connectivity was a focus in stakeholder sessions and is supported by regional data and literature. Access and connectivity includes inter-regional travel and access for both essential services and leisure, as well as the region's level of connectivity with the surrounding state and nation. These considerations are critical to residents, businesses, and visitors as the region pursues economic expansion and sustainability.

Physically, the region faces accessibility and connectivity challenges as a collection of remote communities with unique geographical considerations. Located several hours from major cities by car, residents must consider the types of specialized goods and services they will have trouble accessing in the region, and visitors must devote additional time and attention to their travel plans. These challenges are exacerbated in the winter months, when snow and ice often close critical roadways, leaving communities isolated and without vital resources including food and gas. Some communities in the region are accessible through regional air travel, but the service is often seasonal and limited, with existing flights subsidized by local governments.

Broadband connectivity also challenges residents. While those in the region's few densely populated communities may have adequate service, those in more remote, less dense communities are likely to lack connection that meets federal minimum standards for high-speed internet. Fiber backbone infrastructure exists along the region's most important thoroughfare, but internet service providers have not been adequately enticed to expand into communities where a return on investment for infrastructure buildout is projected to exceed preferable benchmarks.

Strategies

- Increase access to digital resources through broadband infrastructure buildout across the region.
- Enhance the regional transportation network to provide residents, visitors, and businesses with more accessible, reliable options for moving in, out, and within the region.
- Enhance emergency response services to ensure remote communities are equipped for periods of time with no access to services.

Best Practices

West Virginia Speed Test that is monitored and maintained by a diverse stakeholder group for the purpose of measuring achieved speeds against advertised speeds.

California case study that includes cost sharing for transportation upgrades among benefactors.

Emerging technology in winter maintenance practices include Integrated Modeling for Road Condition Prediction (IMRCP) - overview and in-depth report.

Funding Opportunities

California Senate Bill 156 has allocated roughly six billion dollars for the construction of a statewide open access middle-mile network, some last mile infrastructure, a loan loss reserve for local governments, and local technical assistance grants. Engagement throughout planning and last-mile allocations could help to close existing broadband gaps across the region. Stakeholders should collaborate with local and regional providers to ensure buy-in regarding the middle mile network and to plan to deploy last mile infrastructure using funding allocated from SB 156 or private investment.

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program

The BEAD program is a national program through which the State of California has received $1.86 billion dollars to fund broadband infrastructure buildout and workforce development programming. The state must plan for the allocation of these dollars and will seek input from stakeholders across the state to inform the use of the funds.

Mobility, Access, and Transportation Insecurity: Creating Links to Opportunity Research and Demonstration Program

This federal grant program funds initiatives that research transportation access and explore mobility solutions across community stakeholders. If renewed for 2024 (2023 NOFO was posted in August 2022), it could allow the region to assess the feasibility of transportation interventions and upgrades.

Other Funding Opportunities:

- Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants
- USDA Reconnect Loan and Grant Program
- Public Transit on Indian Reservations Program



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

Goal: Improve and enhance regional access and connectivity within the region and with surrounding geographies.
Partners/Champions: Local governments, Internet service providers, CAT, OES, Caltrans

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Increase access to digital resources through broadband infrastructure buildout across the region.	• Catalog existing assets that may help to offset the cost of buildout for providers. Include capital resources as well as in-kind resources and donations, such as waived permitting fees, access to poles for aerial networks, or efficiencies with other utility maintenance or buildout projects • Encourage local governments to partner with internet service providers to apply for state and federal broadband funding with a focus on last mile connectivity • Develop, deploy, and monitor a broadband speed test tool that will allow communities to track achieved speeds vs. advertised speeds, potentially expanding the locations eligible for federal funding • Participate in statewide planning efforts tied to Senate Bill 156, the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, and other programs to ensure that the region's challenges are accounted for in funding distribution	Medium-term (2-3 years)	• Creation of local asset & incentive catalog • Number of grant opportunities pursued • Creation of speed test tool • Meeting attendance, committee membership, etc.

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Enhance the regional transportation network to provide residents, visitors, and businesses with more accessible, reliable options for moving in, out, and within the region.	• Catalog and prioritize existing roadway infrastructure deficiencies, including but not limited to depressions in asphalt, dangerously narrow roadways, and areas lacking critical safety infrastructure • Determine which populations lack transportation options most severely, and describe the transportation needs of these groups • Explore options to meet the transportation needs of populations identified above, potentially ranging from fixed route services to major metros or local anchors to responsive services provided at a subsidy • Ensure that local planning efforts include provisions for commercial corridors and surrounding neighborhoods in existing communities to enhance walkability and options for multi-modal transit	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Creation of roadway need prioritization document • Creation of transportation need summary • Report written, committee formed, # of interventions considered, etc. • # of local planning efforts incorporating provisions for transportation network enhancement
Enhance emergency response services to ensure remote communities are equipped for periods of time with no access to services.	• Support communities at risk for isolation in winter months in efforts to reserve critical supplies to sustain residents through periods of isolation • Collaborate with Caltrans and county partners to accelerate response times for road clearance and maintenance in isolated communities • Explore emerging tools to anticipate response needs and accelerate response times	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Amount and type of additional supplies reserved • Correspondence facilitated, improved average response times • # & summary of emerging tools evaluated

Community & Culture

The Eastern Sierra region boasts a strong culture of community among the residents, workers, and other key stakeholders with vested interest in the success of the region and its economies. From the stakeholder engagement sessions to the widely distributed community survey, people contended that neighbors are supportive of one another, that there are opportunities to participate actively within the communities through events and other activities, and that the people of the region are resilient. There are some strong examples of recent collaboration such as efforts to develop a trail system, with stakeholder engagement sessions occurring throughout September 2023. The Towns to Trails initiative is an effort to connect Eastern Sierra communities to each other and to the region's extensive public lands.

Workshop participants and survey respondents indicated that community and culture, which may encompass a rugged and remote way of life, made the Eastern Sierra region appealing, while also contributing in part to its limited population size. Without a larger tax and income base, many find it difficult to ensure that amenities and services are available, especially in the more rural areas of the counties.

Throughout the stakeholder engagement process, individuals continuously expressed a strong desire for the small-town culture of individual communities in the region to remain intact even as opportunities for economic growth are pursued. They do not want to risk completely losing the appeal of smaller, tight-knit communities, which indicates a need for thoughtful growth strategies.

Other elements that were important to participants in the workshops were quality of life and low crime that many believe to be a direct result of the close relationships in the communities as well as historic preservation and finding new ways to leverage that in the tourism industry to promote a deeper understanding of the region's rich history and culture.

One area of concern in this theme is that engagement of tribal communities was challenging, highlighting the need for proactive outreach and relationship building with tribal communities, creating engagement opportunities that reflect their needs and preferences for inclusion.

Strategies

- Improve partnerships and interagency collaboration to benefit localities and facilitate regionally-focused efforts.
- Capitalize on strong community engagement to garner support for new initiatives, projects, etc.
- Enhance the region's existing quality of life with additional amenities to attract and retain talent.
- Strengthen tribal relationships in the communities and counties and involve leadership in conversations and decisions to plan and implement strategies.
- Build out a more robust, uniform regional communication strategy for sharing information, including emergency responses, with people who live, work, and recreate in the region.

Best Practices

USDA Resource Guide for Rural Workforce Development

This guide is designed to help communities that are looking for ways to support their workforce needs, including talent attraction and retention efforts. The focus on rural communities is widely applicable to the communities of the Eastern Sierra region.

Collaborating for Prosperity with American Indians and Alaska Natives

Relationships with tribal communities are critical for helping the Eastern Sierra realize its economic growth potential. This guide demonstrates the many resources and past successes of tribal communities in funding their projects and initiatives for community and economic prosperity.

Funding Opportunities

California Strategic Growth Council's Community Resilience Centers Program

This program funds new construction and upgrades of neighborhood-level resilience centers to provide shelter and resources during climate and other emergencies. Additionally, funding is available for year-round services and ongoing programming that build overall community resilience.

Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF)

CERF is a statewide opportunities to promote a sustainable and equitable recovery from the economic distress of COVID-19 by supporting new plans and strategies to diversify local economies and develop sustainable industries that create high-quality, broadly accessible jobs for all Californians.

Next Generation Warning System Grant Program

The Next Generation Warning System Grant Program (NGWSGP) supports investments improving the resiliency and security of public broadcasting networks and systems. It enables public television broadcasters, public radio stations, and more to update their digital capabilities so that information about disasters and emergencies is properly distributed to members of the community, including individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and other accessibility needs.

Community Heart & Soul Seed Grant Program

The Community Heart & Soul Seed Grant Program provides $10,000 in funding for resident-driven groups in small cities and towns to start the Community Heart & Soul model. Grant funding requires a $10,000 cash match from the participating municipality or a partnering organization.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: COMMUNITY & CULTURE

Goal: Maintain and capitalize on strong community culture.

Partners/Champions: Community-based organizations, arts and culture partners, emergency services providers/responders, tribal communities

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Improve partnerships and interagency collaboration to benefit localities and facilitate regionally-focused efforts.	• Conduct a mapping exercise to identify all partnerships critical to CEDS execution with point of contact information • Devise an outreach strategy to bring these partners in as stakeholders • Create regular opportunities for these partnerships to engage in the implementation process • Establish regular communication channels and platforms to facilitate information sharing among the partners	Short-term (1-2 years)	• CEDS execution partners map • Creation of outreach strategy • Number of meetings with regional partners
Garner support for new economic development-related initiatives, projects, etc. by developing and capitalizing on strong community engagement.	• Effectively educate the public on continuous activities related to the implementation of the CEDS • Provide opportunities for community members to actively participate in the implementation of new initiatives and projects	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Number of region residents participating in activities • Number of agencies and organizations engaged with CEDS implementation • Annual publication and promotion of CEDS progress
Enhance the region's existing quality of life with additional amenities to attract and retain talent.	• Support individual communities in their development of achievable plans for talent attraction and retention based on each community's assets and needs • Engage employers about talent retention priorities and strategies • Incorporate natural and cultural assets in local and regional marketing efforts	Long-term (3-5 years)	• See Economic Expansion & Diversification section • Marketing plan updates that reflect incorporation of natural and cultural assets

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Strengthen tribal relationships in the communities and counties and involve leadership in conversations and decisions to plan and implement strategies.	• Designate a point of contact for the region to provide ongoing, focused communication and ensure tribal leadership is engaged in conversations and decisions • Organize regular engagements with tribal leaders and representatives from tribal communities • Support each tribal community's ongoing and future economic development initiatives	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Number of meetings with tribal representatives and leaders • Partnerships with tribal communities to support economic development initiatives • Incorporate plan adjustments recommended by tribal leadership • # of executed opportunities to support each tribal community's economic development initiatives
Build out a more robust, uniform regional communication strategy for sharing information, including emergency responses, with people who live, work, and recreate in the region.	• Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to understand the existing communication landscape throughout the region across government partners and key partners like chambers of commerce and business associations • Collaboratively develop a comprehensive communication plan that outlines the strategies, tactics, and responsibilities of each participating entity • Align resources for implementation which may involve securing funding for communication equipment, technology upgrades, and training for relevant staff	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Completion of needs assessment • Adoption of regionwide communication strategy • Communications and marketing reach • Funding secured for increased capacity related to communications strategy

Economic Expansion & Diversification

The Eastern Sierra region has the opportunity to determine current and future needs of existing businesses and develop programs and policies to address those needs. This can lead to employment growth through entrepreneurship, business expansion, and industry diversification.

The Eastern Sierra region is ready to evolve its business and economic development support efforts to build on existing networks that support core industries that include accommodation and food services, manufacturing, health care and social services, agriculture, and other top industries. Core features of any economic development strategy include services to support these business categories:

- Existing businesses seeking to grow or in need of navigating challenges (business retention and expansion)
- Businesses seeking to invest in the region for the first time with a new facility (business attraction)
- Entrepreneurs and small businesses with unique needs related to starting up and scaling a business

With outdoor recreation as a vital component of the business community that impacts employment, visitors, and the region's tax base, it is a strong example of how economic development efforts can make a difference in a region. Efforts to help existing outdoor recreation companies thrive and expand, helping new outdoor recreation businesses find a home and a platform in the region, and providing entrepreneurs and small businesses with tools to start up and grow sustainably in the region are all worthwhile efforts to have available in this region.

Visit California announced in early 2023 the development of an initiative to promote sustainable tourism, and action plans for 12 regions, including the "High Sierra region" which includes the three counties included in this CEDS, will be developed. Many goals for this initiative will complement this plan, including creating responsible travel principles to protect the environment and natural assets and assessment of climate impacts from tourism with mitigation recommendations.

A strong economic development strategy can also leverage existing industrial sector strengths to encourage innovation in areas that are important to stakeholders, such as sustainable tourism or disaster preparedness and response. The region can seek out opportunities and deploy interventions that address key areas of importance to stakeholders, like economic resiliency and protection of precious natural assets, diversifying the economic base of the region while promoting entrepreneurship and sustainability at the same time.

Main street/downtown corridors across the region are a special opportunity that can address several different needs in the region: real estate locations for small businesses, vital resources and collaboration for entrepreneurs, and a continued destination for residents and visitors for lodging, dining, and activities. Business and visitor experiences in downtown corridors can evolve though infrastructure upgrades, façade improvements, and multi-modal transportation enhancements.

Increased opportunities to match available workers with the needs of existing industry would help address workforce concerns that exist for most industry sectors. Like most regions, there is room to improve the skill sets of available workers to better match the needs of existing businesses. Additionally, ensuring that the region's secondary and higher education providers are partners in economic and workforce development efforts can help build a sustainable talent pipeline that meets the needs of the existing and growing industries of the Eastern Sierra. A better understanding of how ancillary services, like childcare provision, affect the dynamics of workforce availability and participation would also assist the region in addressing the labor needs of key industries.

Feedback from elected officials and the public in the region during review of the draft of this document revealed several comments related to what additional opportunities may exist for economic diversification and expansion: agriculture, renewable energy, and mining as examples. A targeted industry analysis would help determine which specific industries are a good fit for additional efforts, and a new recommendation to complete a regional targeted industry analysis is now included.

Objectives

- Build relationships with existing businesses through a formal business retention and expansion (BRE) program and respond to their needs through supportive services and connections to service providers.
- Build upon and transform opportunities for businesses to convene by industry sector to better understand and address common issues related to supply chain, workforce, etc.
- Enhance network of entrepreneurial and small business resources to encourage new business development within the region.
- Initiate and support efforts related to real estate solutions that complement industry and residential needs. Downtown corridors are areas of great need in the region as vibrant centers for convention, recreation, and visitors.
- Thoroughly study and review the current status of the labor market and gaps in workforce services provision, for both employers and individuals. Provide new workforce development solutions that address gaps and improve outcomes for companies and individuals.
- Identify additional data-informed opportunities that may exist for economic diversification and expansion.

Best Practices

Guide to Building a Business Retention & Expansion Program by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension

This article provides step-by-step guidance on how to build a BRE program. It emphasizes how both leaders in business support services and government partners can coordinate outreach, use a uniform data collection approach (like a survey) to capture important data points and identify opportunities and barriers related to growth and warning signs of downsizing, closure, etc.

BRE Resource Library and Program Awards by Business Retention and Expansion International

Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) is a membership-based organization dedicated to helping communities build and improve formalized BRE programs. They have an extensive resource library and an annual awards program that showcases well-executed and innovative BRE programs. They focus on assisting and supporting smaller, rural communities.

Funding Opportunities

Rural Community Development Initiative (RDCI) Grants

RCDI is a matching-funds program through the US Department of Agriculture designed to assist communities to build capacity in areas of housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects. Projects can receive $50,000 to $500,000 and support efforts related to Business Retention & Expansion programs, entrepreneurial support, childcare facilities, and much more. This funding stream can support efforts in this goal area and others in this CEDS, such as Housing Availability & Land Use.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: ECONOMIC EXPANSION & DIVERSIFICATION

Goal: Grow and diversify the regional economy through support of existing and new businesses.

Partners/Champions: Regional economic development organizations, local chambers of commerce, entrepreneurial supportive services

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Build relationships with existing businesses and respond to their needs.	• Build a formal business retention and expansion (BRE) program • Assemble and deploy a network of supportive services and providers to provide technical assistance • Seek funding opportunities to build capacity to grow the BRE program over time	Medium-term (2-3 years)	• Number of BRE visits conducted annually • Established network of service providers and supportive services • Number of firms referred/connected to service providers and supportive services • Tracked outcomes of companies that successfully navigate services/resources
Build upon and transform opportunities for businesses to convene by industry sector to better understand and address common issues related to supply chain, workforce, etc.	• Leverage existing groups convened by partners like chambers or industry associations and adopt a sector partnership model • Assist industry-identified priorities with supportive services, advocacy, funding efforts, etc.	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Number of industry-specific groups led by industry active in the region • Annual report of successful outcomes from industry groups • Identification and success of industry-specific initiatives
Enhance network of entrepreneurial and small business resources to encourage new business development within the region.	• Support and promote opportunities for entrepreneurs to convene, network, and learn • Collaborate with service providers like SBDC, SCORE, and local service providers to bring workshops and trainings to the region • Create a regional asset map of entrepreneurial and small business resources • Develop a plan to address gaps in the regional asset map	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Number of networking events • Number of workshops/trainings • Asset map • Plans to address one or more gaps in the asset map

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Initiate and support efforts related to real estate solutions that complement industry and residential needs.	• Create façade improvement programs for downtown areas • Leverage historic designations to secure funding for building improvements • Establish a revolving loan fund to support investment in real estate solutions that support the needs of businesses • Invest in business district upgrades that improve walkability and bikeability • Revisit and update potential industrial sites in the region and determine priority, viability, funding, etc.	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Establishment of programs • Number of businesses or buildings receiving assistance • Improved walkability scores in main street/ downtown districts
Thoroughly study and review the current status of the labor market and gaps in workforce services provision, for both employers and individuals.	• Conduct a workforce and skills gap analysis with asset mapping of workforce and employment services • Provide new workforce development solutions that address gaps and improve outcomes for companies and individuals	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Workforce and skills gap analysis • Asset map of workforce and employment services
Identify additional data-informed opportunities that may exist for economic diversification and expansion.	• Conduct a regional targeted industry analysis	Medium-term (2-3 years)	• Completion of analysis • Adoption of recommendations in regional and local economic development efforts

Environmental Resilience & Sustainability

Environmental stewardship and preservation of natural assets is a critical component of the region's vision for the future. Residents emphasized the enjoyment received from accessing and appreciating the landscape and access to recreation as a key feature to quality of life. The region's natural assets are also a key feature of the vitality of the tourism industry and must be preserved and protected for future, long-term enjoyment.

The region's exposure to extreme weather events pass uncertainty, risk, inconvenience, and isolation to businesses and residents. With record snowfall in Winter 2022-2023, some communities only accessible by mountain pass were isolated from the surrounding region for months, unable to access vital resources. Small business owners shared that accessibility challenges in winter months prevent customers from accessing their businesses and impact the revenue that they are able to generate. Additionally, wildfires have occurred throughout the region with increased frequency in recent years, straining the capacity of first responders and threatening residencies and businesses in vulnerable areas.

The State of California releases an updated climate adaptation strategy every three years, most recently in 2021. The current strategy has priorities that include building capacity in climate vulnerable communities, encouraging tribal and local governments to incorporate climate considerations into emergency planning efforts, and to strengthen climate resilience of natural systems. The strategy divides the State into regions with specific engagement opportunities.

Objectives

- Reduce the challenges experienced by residents and visitors during winter climate events.
- Enhance the network of industry and community stewards to develop, adopt, and promote guidelines for sustainable tourism.
- Consider sustainable tourism as a budding industry with workforce needs, entrepreneurial opportunities, and infrastructure requirements.

Best Practices

Adaptation Clearinghouse by State of California's Governor's Office of Planning & Research

This searchable database includes planning resources, case studies, and tools to support planning and initiatives that help address climate-related challenges and issues. It also highlights plans and initiatives led by tribal communities.

Funding Opportunities

CoolCalifornia.org Local Government Portal

CoolCalifornia.org hosts a tool kit to assist local governments with the development of a climate action plan with a resource library, interactive map of case studies and examples, and a searchable funding database for sustainability projects.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

Goal: Prioritize opportunities to preserve natural assets and support service provision needs of residents during weather and disaster events.
Partners/Champions: Local government, emergency services providers/responders, tribal communities, California Climate Adaptation Strategy

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Reduce the challenges experienced by residents and visitors during climate events.	• Create a regional working group that encourages collaboration across the three counties with their current plans, offices, and staff related to emergency response and disaster preparedness • Pursue climate action planning as a region, leveraging resources for greater impact	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Working group established and meeting regularly • Climate action plan for the region
Enhance the network of industry and community stewards to develop, adopt, and promote guidelines for sustainable tourism.	• Designate a group of sustainable tourism champions to plug into state-level initiatives to leverage plans and resources to advance outcomes in the region • Develop regional guidelines to inform and encourage sustainable tourism initiatives and practices	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Sustainable tourism champions identified and actively participating in state-level initiatives • Adoption of state-level sustainable tourism initiatives at the regional level
Consider sustainable tourism as a budding industry with workforce needs, entrepreneurial opportunities, and infrastructure requirements.	• Embed sustainable tourism into other plan elements to address workforce, entrepreneurial, and infrastructure needs • Gain support for any needed infrastructure developments like visitor centers, trail systems, amenities upgrades, and more • Sustainable tourism champions identified and actively participating in state-level initiatives	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Sustainable tourism represented in industry-led groups, BRE outreach, entrepreneurial supports and services • Sustainable tourism represented in workforce analysis and mapping

Government Affairs & Advocacy

The Eastern Sierra region would like to see stronger relationships and increased visibility with other leaders in neighboring regions and at state and federal levels where residents do not feel they are valued or heard by those entities. Staff turnover was identified as a contributor to the challenge of building and maintaining strong relationships with key offices.

Community leaders and stakeholder believe that funding sources are available to support the identified needs of the region based on the stakeholder engagement activities, but the region lacks the capacity to seek out, apply for, and successfully secure grant opportunities.

Strategies

- Build capacity within ESCOG as well as Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties and other key partners for improved government affairs, prioritizing relationship-building with the key state and federal entities who directly impact the implementation of CEDS strategy recommendations.
- Study the broader economic impact of regional strategy recommendations to garner more support from state and federal government agencies.
- Equip local government partners with knowledge and capacity for procuring and administering federal funding to ensure relevant opportunities can be pursued.

Best Practices

Local Government Solutions for COVID-19 and Beyond: Grants Management Capacity

This resource guide is part of a set of documents developed by FEMA in response to the disaster recovery challenges state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments have faced; however, these solutions are easily applied outside the context of disaster. Here, grants management capacity is addressed with examples of solutions from varying community types, intended to provide guidance and resources.

Familiarization Experiences

Chambers of commerce and economic development organizations have a best practice of familiarization experiences that are embedded into advocacy or business development programs. Advocacy examples include a Day at the Capital or a DC Fly-in where local stakeholders visit the state or national capital with an agenda to meet with specific lawmakers or agencies to promote their region's priorities on topics like transportation, workforce, etc. Business development programs will often have a familiarization tour for site selection consultants to visit the region and learn more about its assets. State and federal officials and leaders can be invited to the region to experience its assets and needs and create space for local stakeholders to build relationships and discuss top priorities for the region.

Funding Opportunities

Rural Community Development Initiative Grants in California

RCDI grants are awarded to help non-profit housing and community development organizations, low-income rural communities and federally recognized tribes improve housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

Community Economic Development

CED grants are awarded to fund initiatives designed to improve the economic self-sufficiency of low-income individuals in communities with high unemployment and poverty rates through sustainable business development and new employment opportunities helping to create resilient communities that address the needs of individuals, families, and children.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & ADVOCACY

Goal: Promote stronger government affairs & advocacy efforts.

Partners/Champions: Local elected officials, local government entities, state government agencies, federal agency representatives and regional offices, philanthropic and private funders

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Build capacity within ESCOG as well as Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties and other key partners for improved government affairs, prioritizing relationship-building with the key state and federal entities who directly impact the implementation of CEDS strategy recommendations.	• Map all local, state, and federal government agencies who can directly impact the implementation of CEDS strategy recommendations • Conduct strategic outreach to these government agencies to pinpoint an effective point of contact for conversations and activities related to the CEDS	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Completion of map of target government agencies for collaboration • Number of agencies with base relationship and point of contact established
Study the broader economic impact of regional strategy recommendations to garner more support from state and federal government agencies.	• Gather the necessary data to assess the economic impact of the CEDS strategy recommendations and relevant future projects or initiatives • Use impact results to communicate the importance of government agency partnership and support to the implementation of the CEDS to stakeholders, policymakers, and the public	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Number of economic impact assessments completed • Number of presentations, meetings, and communication pieces related to communicating economic impact
Equip local government partners with knowledge and capacity for identifying and securing federal funding to ensure relevant opportunities can be pursued.	• Create and maintain database of relevant programs and funding opportunities • Designate individuals or create a cross-agency team specifically responsible for researching, identifying, and pursuing funding opportunities • Establish relationships with other nonprofits, community organizations, and regional entities and collaborate on grant applications with shared expertise and resources • Leverage support and resources available at the state and federal levels to help regions collaborate and access funding	Medium-term (2-3 years)	• Creation of funding opportunities database • Number of funding applications submitted • Number of funding awards • Number of partnerships with MOUs and/or letters of intent to collaborate

Housing Availability & Land Use

A vast majority of the land in the Eastern Sierra region is publicly owned, with significant portions under federal and state management or owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water & Power to provide water to the LA metro region. Much of the privately-owned land is not located near existing communities and is limited in potential uses by infrastructure costs, demand, or access to amenities. Working within these parameters significantly limits the options available for additional housing development.

The importance of the tourism industry in certain areas of the region is also impacting housing. In tourism-focused areas, high land cost makes it difficult to develop housing for both year-round and seasonal workers. County and local governments throughout the region might seek partnerships with local employers to meet their shared workforce housing needs in the form of affordable housing developments earmarked for workers in a specific industry or location, rental assistance programs, or the development of a land trust for affordable housing.

While the cost of living in the Eastern Sierra region is relatively lower than in many other areas of the state, the lack of available housing could continue to put the region's economy at risk. Due to limited space, efforts to encourage denser multifamily and mixed-use development may help to limit rising housing costs in the area and provide opportunities for the region's workforce to find suitable housing close to employment centers. Zoning policy statewide supports these types of developments despite potential resistance from some community members.

Limited available land also places a high importance on maintaining the quality and integrity of existing structures or determine opportunities for infill redevelopment. Striking a balance between the two will require current conditions assessment and the identification of existing federal and state funding opportunities to make the best use of existing infrastructure while balancing the needs of existing residents and community-members.

Strategies

- Increase available land for private development
- Work to improve housing stock within restrictions on available land
- Expand additional housing options within affordable range for regional workforce

Funding Opportunities

HUD: Community Development Block Grants

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities. Activities may address needs such as infrastructure, economic development projects, public facilities installation, community centers, housing rehabilitation, homeowner assistance, etc.

USDA: Multifamily Programs

Multifamily Housing assists rural property owners through loans, loan guarantees, and grants that enable owners to develop and rehabilitate properties for low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals and families as well as domestic farm laborers. The program works with the owners of its direct and farm labor housing loan properties to subsidize rents for low-income tenants who cannot afford to pay their full rent.

State of California: Homekey Program

Homekey is an opportunity for state, regional, and local public entities to develop a broad range of housing types, including single-family homes and multifamily apartments and the conversion of commercial properties and other existing buildings to permanent or interim housing.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: HOUSING AVAILABILITY & LAND USE

Goal: Increase stock and availability of housing units with a focus on affordability for regional workforce.
Partners/Champions: County planning and zoning departments, City of Los Angeles, Federal and State government entities

Objectives	Action Items	Timeline	Metrics for Success
Increase amount of available land for private development.	• Explore opportunities to purchase, trade, or lease land from public entities who own or manage land in the region • Identify any parcels in unincorporated areas that are eligible for private purchase and explore opportunities to incentivize private purchase and development of these lands	Long-term (3-5 years)	• Exploration of processes for land trades, purchase, or lease of public lands • Assessment of status of past negotiations and strategic direction for utilization or sale of any procured land
Work to improve and expand housing stock on available land.	• Identify areas with opportunities for infill redevelopment, in both residential or non-residential zones, to take advantage of existing infrastructure and create additional housing where available land is limited • Consider the creation of overlay districts to promote higher density or mixed-use development in nonresidential zones • Pursue federal and state funding programs designed to redevelop, improve, or maintain conditions of existing housing stock	Short-term (1-2 years)	• Complete housing needs assessment and strategic plan
Expand additional housing options within affordable range for regional workforce.	• Identify and potentially incentivize opportunities for workforce (low- and moderate- income) housing near employment centers • Explore opportunities for employers to contribute to or develop housing for year-round and seasonal employees	Medium-term (2-3 years)	• Complete funding scan • Convene business resources group and establish workforce housing working group

Appendix

Appendix A: Resolution

The formal adoption of the CEDS by the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG) will take place in the coming weeks after the following groups formally adopt a resolution of support after the finalization of this document: Alpine County, Inyo County, Mono County, Town of Bishop, and Town of Mammoth Lakes. Below is the language planned for the resolution that will be considered by the ESCOG Board of Directors at an upcoming meeting

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION OF EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS JPA APPROVING THE EASTERN SIERRA COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR ALPINE, INYO AND MONO COUNTIES AS PREPARED AND AUTHORIZING THE STRATEGY TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires the preparation and adoption of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to be approved by the Alpine County Board of Supervisors, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, the Mono County Board of Supervisors and the EDA prior to consideration of certain federal funding; and

WHEREAS, A CEDS is a document developed by jurisdictions for the EDA to apply for vital funding for community economic development initiatives; and

WHEREAS, The Counties of Alpine, Inyo and Mono conducted its CEDS process following federal Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 13 CPR §303.6; and

WHEREAS, The CEDS takes into account and, where appropriate, incorporates or leverages other regional planning efforts, including the use of available federal funds, private sector resources, and state support which can advance a region's CEDS goals and objectives; and

WHEREAS, The CEDS process analyzes existing regional conditions, opportunities, and global economic conditions, leading to a region-specific strategy-driven plan for economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, The CEDS must be updated every five years to stay relevant with changing economic conditions and to qualify for U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, EDA has been an important partner in financing economic development projects; and

WHEREAS, In addition to summarizing the status of the local economy and areas of opportunities, the focal point of the CEDS is identification of projects that may be eligible for federal grant funding; and

WHEREAS, Adoption of the CEDS is a federal requirement which the Alpine County, Inyo County and Mono County, and qualified organizations within the region, must meet to apply to EDA for Public Works or Economic Adjustment Assistance Program grants; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments serves as a regional joint powers authority representing Inyo County, Mono County, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and the City of Bishop, and is the appropriate regional organization to serve as the lead agency to submit the CEDS to the EDA; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments JPA that

1. After reviewing the CEDS document attached hereto as Exhibit A, hereby approves the report and authorizes the submission of the CEDS to the EDA.
2. Adoption of this Resolution is not a Project as that term is defined by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Passed and adopted this ___ day of _____

Jeff Griffiths, Chair, Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

ATTEST:

Clerk

Appendix B: CEDS Steering Committee & Participating Organizations

The CEDS Steering committee included community leaders from across the region, as well as representatives from the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC). The group met regularly to guide the CEDS process and offer perspectives from their respective communities and the region as a whole. The steering committee included:

SARAH BOLNIK
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

BOB BURRIS
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

JT CHEVALIER
Economic Development Director & Public Information Officer, Alpine County

CHRIS EGAN
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

LIZ GRANS
Economic Development Manager, Mono County

BARBARA HAYES
Chief Economic Development Officer, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

DANIEL HOLLER
Town Manager, Town of Mammoth Lakes

ELAINE KABALA
Executive Director, Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

MEAGHAN MCCAMMAN
Assistant County Administrator, Inyo County

SANDRA MOBERLY
Community & Economic Development Director, Town of Mammoth Lakes

TERRANCE ROGERS
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

JEFF SIMPSON
Economic Development Director, Mono County

Appendix C: Verification of the 30-Day Public Comment Period

The 30-day public comment period opened on July 31, 2023 and closed on September 1, 2023. The draft CEDS and an online form for members of the public to freely enter their thoughts were published on ESCOG's website, www.escog.gov, and promoted to the public by members of the steering committee.

All comments submitted during the 30-day public comment period are appreciated and included here to take into consideration to inform next steps as ESCOG and partners across the region take steps to continue planning and execute implementation. ESCOG is also encouraged to review and update the CEDS regularly as more data is gathered and recommendations can become more targeted with specific projects.

While the ESCOG is responsible for developing and maintaining the regional CEDS, the deployment of this CEDS requires efforts to be advanced by many organizations within the ecosystem across the region.

All comments are listed below with the county of the commenter noted (if it was provided). The body of each comment is shared exactly how it was entered into the online comment portal. This includes errors related to spelling, grammar, and punctuation.



PROJECT UPDATES

On July 31, 2023, a draft of the 2023-2028 Eastern Sierra Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was made available for public comment. The Eastern Sierra region includes Alpine, Inyo, and Mono Counties. A CEDS is designed to guide a region's economic developments, not to prescribe specific initiatives at the local level.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the draft of the CEDS to learn about the purpose of the document, the process executed to develop the CEDS, and goals and objectives for the region to consider to advance economic interests of the region in the next five years.

The public comment period will close on August 30, 2023. At that time, all public comments received will be reviewed prior to formal adoption of the final version of the Eastern Sierra Region CEDS.

You can review the document and provide comments via our public comment portal at the links below.

DRAFT EASTERN SIERRA CEDS

PUBLIC INPUT PORTAL

Comment (with County of representation, if identified)	Response
[Inyo County] Please be aware that goverment funds used for housing now limits landlords ability to manage those properties. There are new laws regarding this type of funding/loans. Where can the community see the entire ceds package. There was more information shown to the City Council, that is not shown here.	**Flagged for further discussion:** The material included in this report constitutes the entire CEDS package, although local governments may discuss a number of topics tangential to the CEDS or in order to inform the CEDS.
Does the city/county have a list of non-occupied homes in the area? Is there a list of airbnb homes in the area. Two sources of housing that are not mentioned in the ceds.	**Accepted:** ocal housing policies and practices vary throughout the CEDS region, and we recommend reaching out to your local elected officials to inquire about such a list. Language has been added to the draft acknowledging the potential effects of second-home ownership and short-term rentals on the housing stock throughout the region.
[Mono County] think long term goals and how to get there with smart growth in mind	**Accepted**
[Inyo County] Most of this document appears to be boilerplate language that repeats information that is already well known. It appears to make no mention of really expanding on and encouraging the development of mineral extraction within the region which is greatly needed for jobs and construction projects. The area's history and development was from mining and lumber industry and the resources still exist within the area and aren't being utilized. The area needs surface mining operations for gravel, DG, cinders, and sand for road construction and maintenance and for private construction projects. Right now, there are no available local sources for that and most of it is hauled into the area from Kern and Nevada. Economic development in the area will benefit from reliable, locally sourced material and this needs to start with BLM, the USFS, State Lands commission, and LADWP who have something to do with mining.	**Flagged for further discussion:** While the region's important history as a collection of mining communities is discussed in the CEDS, mining did not emerge as an industry with high growth rates or a large economic impact in the present-day. Expanding mining operations in the region may be further complicated by the lack of available land and environmental conservation and preservation efforts. That said, construction and manufacturing did emerge as growing industries, with wood product manufacturing showing modest growth. These industries may play an important role in the infrastructure needs referenced.
[Inyo County] In the draft CEDS document, the median housing costs seem low, especially housing anywhere near employment opportunities. I've always paid almost twice that in rent in the past decade, and it's increased annually since Covid-19. I assume this uses ACS data. What's shown doesn't reflect what full-year, employed residents pay. I'm not sure usual methodology makes sense in a mountain community with such unusual constraints. Those moving here to fill positions needed to grow/diversify the economy will pay much more.	**Accepted:** Additional discussion of ACS methodology and the potential for higher housing costs than reflected by the ACS has been added. Additionally, a short section titled "Seasonal Homes and Vacancy" has been added to discuss the prevalence of seasonal residents and their impact on the data included in this report.
The issue with housing costs and availability is addressed, but may be under-developed in the plan and may need more recent data with more granularity. Perhaps greater segmentation of the data would show more opportunities and a better representation of the issues faced in an economic development framework.	**Flagged for further discussion:** This comment demonstrates the importance of the recommendation related to conducting a housing needs assessment with a strategic plan.
[Inyo County] More tourism needs to be brought to the 395 corridor of Lone Pine, Big Pine, Independence, etcetera, even Bishop, these communities are dying. Lack of medical, lack of services, lack, lack, lack. Go visit Gardnerville just across the border in Nevada and see a thriving "cute" community. A place you want to visit (not referring to gambling), that has a charm as you drive through and makes you want to stop even if you have no reason to. Right now all these ES 395 cities are basically drive through cities, like flyover states. Make them a reason to visit for tourists to spend dollars, year round. A place that young families will want to come and put down roots and start families. Without opportunity nothing will survive.	**Flagged for further discussion**

Comment (with County of representation, if identified)	Response
[Mono County] Yes, infrastructure is good and of course so is tourism, which is the life blood for many full-time residents. What we don't want is Disneyland in ML resulting in manifestations of more trash, more cigarette butts, more traffic, more diesel and tail pipe pollution for those of us who enjoy walking and biking around town, and air b and b rental properties continuing to price out and reduce housing opportunities for residents and seasonal mountain employees and the perceived need to cut down trees to build more low income housing, or competition to be the new Vail with continuous sprawl and an ever-expanding footprint into natural lands. (It is upsetting to see a street that is named for what beautiful thing used to be there but was destroyed for the development.) Always take into consideration the environment/ecosystem/climate costs (i.e. removing mature trees and disrupting soil and meadowlands, water, CO2 and methane production/capture). For example, petroleum- based plastic covering on forest soil is a travesty and is flat out wrong on so many levels. This should be banned already. I think your shuttle and City wide/county wide vehicle fleet should be electric with more charging stations around town. THINK OF WAY TO CUT ML'S CARBON FOOTPRINT NOT ADD TO IT!!!!!! THIS IS OUR #1 RESPONSIBILITY! An effective ZERO WASTE policy and executable and enforceable plan is not an option but a necessity for EVERYTHING that is currently landfilled ASAP; especially with the increase in tourism. In the meantime, hire a team to clean up after them and their cigarette butts (tobacco ban ordinance should be considered). You are correct that all building and expansion must be carried out with the best available science in mind and with the input from tribal representatives for our best shot at resiliency and adaptation to unpredictable and increasingly extreme climate conditions. For example, indigenous peoples hold the knowledge of how to best manage the forest and grasslands. Invite them to take on these important roles, avoid tokenism, and compensate them well for their time to sit at your table and provide input for your plans. Mammoth's beauty is unparalleled. THE BIGGEST THING WE NEED TO DO IS LEAVE IT ALONE AND NURTURE IT. If the tribal members do come to the table, hopefully they will echo that exploitation and growth is not always the best answer. Progress does not always equal development. Thank you for your caring and consideration. I have a full-time job, but I am glad to help pro-bono to implement any or all of the above-mentioned policies and solutions. Respectfully, [REDACTED]	**Accepted:** We agree that sustainability and conservation of natural resources must be a top priority for the region. We hope that this plan's third focus area, Resilience and Sustainability, addresses the items discussed here. Specifically, we hope that the second objective, "Enhance the network of industry and community stewards to develop, adopt, and promote guidelines for sustainable tourism" is embraced as the first step of many towards ensuring that economic growth does not come at the expense of the region's environment and natural resources. The strengthening of tribal relationships and ongoing partnerships with tribal communities is also critical in the implementation of the CEDS.
[Mono County] On Page 9, under Cultural Assets, I would recommend removing mining from the list of things that add to our rich history.	**Flagged for Further Discussion**
Pg. 11, Add John Muir Trail to the discussion about the backpacking opportunities on the PCT.	**Accepted**
On page 15, the Median Monthly Housing Costs look low to me. I understand this came from the ACS but are there any other sources? I think if not then we should make note that there is a lack of available housing stock to rent so the Percent of Cost Burdened Household in Figure 8 appears artificially low.	**Accepted:** Additional discussion of ACS methodology and the potential for higher housing costs than reflected by the ACS has been added.
On page 22, under Air Quality, add information about the challenges faced at the Dry Owens lake bed and Mono Lake with respect to PM 10 particulate matter.	**Accepted**
A threat we face as a region that I did not see specifically called out is the risk that our rural hospitals face as reimbursement rates continue to be inadequate to cover costs. That poses risks to community members in terms of access and also to local employment because healthcare jobs are a key component of our workforce.	**Flagged for Further Discussion**

Comment (with County of representation, if identified)	Response
[Inyo County] page 13 (median household income) -- how are these computed? is tehre a way to compute it for permanent residents?	**Accepted:** This data is from the American Community Survey. A short section titled “Seasonal Homes and Vacancy” has been added to discuss the prevalence of seasonal residents and their impact on the data included in this report.
page 28 (figure 13) -- that figure is gross and not very informative. We should change it from a venn diagram to a table. venn diagrams are typically normalized so the two circles are the same size. This is not the case here, so this shouldnt’ be a venn diagram. One question about the data here, though: it would be good to know of the large number of people who “live in the selection area, employed outside”, how many of those are remote jobs? I ask because those don’t really require commuting, which seems to be what this figure is trying to get at (and concluding when they say this figure indicates many residents are seeking jobs outside the region).	**Flagged for Further Discussion:** This figure is not technically a Venn diagram, although it does have the same shape as a Venn diagram. The figure is produced by the US Census Bureau and does not address remote work.
SWOT analysis pie charts (pages 30-33): those pie charts aren’t well described. I have no idea what they mean from reading the document. For example, in the first one (Access and Connectivity) is this saying that 14% of the respondents think broadband access is the biggest challenge we face? 14% of respondents think it’s a problem? 14% think it’s an asset that we have? There needs to be some description (at the very least a legend) that says what these graphs are actually showing.	**Accepted:** Additional language has been added to help clarify the figures referenced.
Same comment also applies to the next section -- what are these pie charts indicating? are they indicating what respondents think is the main strength/weakness/issue? it’s not clear what those pie charts are saying.	**Accepted:** Additional language has been added to help clarify the figures referenced.
Goal 1: (access and connectivity) -- can you expand on the goal about road conditions? I’m not clear why this is a priority for economic development. is there any indication that our economic development is currently stifled by the lack of road stuff?	**Flagged for Further Discussion:** Flooding and severe winter weather have, in recent years, caused road closures that render businesses and attractions inaccessible. Transportation infrastructure is vital to the exchange of commerce and workers.
Goal 3: I feel like part of diversification should include industries that take advantage of the natural resources we have here (but not like the old-school way of thinking, i.e., mining). I would imagine things like city of bishop has access to a lot of water, so hydroponic growing; or solar farms; the kind of things that make use of our resources to diversify industries but in novel ways. Also, I think we should also look at what kind of remote jobs people in the area are getting, and focus efforts on making sure we have schools to gain the skills needed for those jobs.	**Accepted:** An expanded targeted industry analysis has been added to the recommendations.
Goal 5 (housing): that’s a worthwhile goal, but do we really think CEDS is the one that’s going to do this?	**Flagged for Further Discussion:** The CEDS implementation falls on a broad coalition of stakeholders, and the CEDS can be a supporting tool accessing federal funding to support housing if appropriate programs are available.

Comment (with County of representation, if identified)	Response
[Inyo County] Hello and thank you for this strategy report. My name is [Redacted] and I work as [Redacted]. I am very concerned about the absence of local food systems considerations in the current CEDS draft of July 31st. I understand that this may reflect a lack of responses in this domain from your respondents, rather than your own grevious ommission. However, I believe that the SWOT Analysis results significantly downplay the opportunities for local food systems development and investment. Considering our location, natural resources, and existing industries, we have very important potential for building up our local food economy through sustainable agritourism development. Many ranchers I have spoken with express a keen need for expanding local meat processing capacities. Restaurants currently have to import much of their food, resulting in lost local revenues sub-par culinary experiences for our region's guests and residents, even with food service being one of our major industries. I would propose that your final report recommend a "local food system assessment." Better yet, if your team can do the research now, please include one as an appendix, as was recently done with the The Bay Area Food Economy: Existing Conditions and Strategies for Resilience, attached to the Bay Area's CEDS). I would be glad to particpate in those discussions and bring Tribal stakeholders to the table as best I can. Thank you, [Redacted]	**Flagged for Further Discussion:** The comment is from an individual affiliated with one of the area's indigenous tribes. The recommendation for a local food system assessment connects other comments and opportunities related to economic diversification and leveraging the tourism industry in the CEDS. This is a strong example of what can come from advancing the objective to "build upon and transform opportunities for businesses to convene by industry sector to better understand and address common issues related to supply chain, workforce, etc." Because this person expressed a desire to be involved with future issues on this matter, their contact information has been share with a representative of ESCOG. This may be a great relationship to nurture to help with strengthening connections with tribal communities.
[Inyo County] Page 9 – states "around half of the visitors that come to the region come from other areas of California." Do you know where this info is coming from? Is it possible to add something that addresses the long-haul travelers and international visitors that come to see the iconic places in our region?	**Accepted:** This information is from a Tourism Industry study conducted by Mono County. A citation has been added, along with a sentence noting other types of visitors.
Page 9 – consider adding OHV, trail running and horseback riding to the list of activities. Many people also come here for wildlife viewing, birdwatching and landscape photography.	**Flagged for Further Discussion**
Page 9 – under Natural Assets, should probably say that Death Valley is in the south eastern part of Inyo.	**Accepted**
Page 19 – ESTA's Lancaster to Reno route is not daily. It does not run on Sundays and holidays.	**Accepted**
Page 28 – This information really surprises me. Is it because so many people live in Alpine County that work in Tahoe or other areas? Is it skewed because of the seasonality of employment in the ski areas? Lastly, I don't know where exactly this would fit in….	**Flagged for Further Discussion:** Additional language has been added about the prevalence of second-home owners and their potential effect on the data.
It is mentioned several times that our tourism industry is "robust." That's good, but there is still room for improvement and growth in this sector. Bishop's average annual hotel occupancy is only at 70%. That means we could sell 93K more room nights per year – without building even one more hotel. We've made good progress in smoothing out the severe seasonality, but there is much work to be done there. If we can fill the rooms in the slower season, this would lead to better year-round employment for everyone employed in hospitality.	**Accepted:** The continued growth of the tourism sector (in an environmentally conscious manner) is a focus of recommendations across focus areas. These include BRE programming recommendations, as well as transportation infrastructure improvements to continue to address seasonality.
Also, in speaking about job training/education, it would be good to see some emphasis on improving skills/knowledge of hospitality workers. There are good careers in this sector in management and all of the local hotels and restaurants have trouble finding management level employees. (and the pay is darn good!)	**Flagged for Further Discussion**

Planning and Economic Development Commission
Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Selection of Planning and Economic Development Commission Officers and Committee Appointments

Commission Meeting Date: 10/11/2023

Prepared by: Nolan Bobroff, Acting Community and Economic Development Director

Recommended Motion: Staff recommends that the Planning and Economic Development Commission appoint members to the following offices and committees: Chair, Vice Chair, Design Committee, Mobility Committee.

Summary: Please see attached staff report.

Town of Mammoth Lakes

Planning & Economic Development Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 11, 2023

AGENDA TITLE: Selection of Planning and Economic Development Commission Officers and Committee Appointments

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:
Community & Economic Development
Nolan Bobroff, Acting Director

OBJECTIVE:
1. Appoint a Chair and Vice Chair
2. Appoint Members to the Mobility and Design Committees

SUMMARY:

The Planning and Economic Development Commission appoints the Chair and Vice Chair as well as Committee members on an annual basis. The Commission should appoint officers and committee members as described in the staff report below.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Planning and Economic Development Commission is a five-member advisory body to the Town Council. The Commission meets the second Wednesday of each month and has powers and responsibilities as set forth in the Town's Municipal Code Chapter 2.32. Members serve a term of four years with eligibility for reappointment; no term limits apply to the Planning and Economic Development Commission.

The current terms are as follows:

- Michael Vanderhurst – Expiration of term – July 31, 2026
- Jennifer Burrows – Expiration of term – July 31, 2024
- Paul Chang – Expiration of term – July 31, 2024
- Greg Eckert – Expiration of term – July 31, 2026
- Jessica Kennedy – Expiration of term – July 31, 2024

II. ANALYSIS

Standing Committee vs. Ad Hoc Committee

Standing committees are those that have a "continuing subject matter jurisdiction" as defined under the Brown Act. They are permanent committees that handle an issue or issues on a continual basis and are subject to the Brown Act's notice and posting requirements. Standing committees need not establish a "regular meeting time

and place" in any operating rules but they must meet in public and post notices of their meetings. The Act presumes that whenever a standing committee holds a meeting that has been posted at least 72 hours in advance, that noticed meeting is considered the "regular meeting" of the standing committee. (Government Code § 54954)

Ad hoc or "temporary" committees are treated differently under the Brown Act. Ad hoc committees are not subject to the notice and posting requirements of the Act so long as the committee is comprised solely of members of the governing body, i.e., the committee may not contain individuals other than the members of the governing body; consists of less than the number of commission members who, if present at a meeting, would be able to make a decision; has a defined purpose and a time frame to accomplish that purpose; and is advisory, i.e., the committee has not been delegated any decision making power and will be returning to the full commission on its recommendation. Currently, the Planning and Economic Development Commission has no ad hoc committees.

Selection of Officers

The Chair and Vice Chair are selected annually from among the Commission's members at the first meeting after July 31. The current agenda item will allow the Commission to discuss and change the Chair and Vice Chair as well as the two "standing" committees, the Design Committee and the Mobility Committee, if necessary. The appointments will remain in place until August 2024. Appointments to committees do not require a formal motion and may be ratified by a consensus of the Commission. Standing committees are required to meet the public notice requirements of the Brown Act.

Design Committee (Standing Committee)

The Design Committee is a standing committee of two members of the Commission who advise staff and applicants on design review of various permit applications and also serve on the Advisory Design Panel[1]. Current appointments: Jennifer Burrows and Paul Chang. Alternate: Jessica Kennedy. The Design Committee typically meets 4 -6 times per year.

Mobility Committee (Standing Committee)

The Mobility Committee is a standing committee of two members of the Commission as well as other representatives from local mobility-related organizations/entities. The Mobility Committee provides input/feedback and helps to prioritize the Walk Bike Ride Action items. Current appointments: Michael Vanderhurst and Jessica Kennedy. Alternate: Greg Eckert. The Mobility Committee last met in August 2020.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning and Economic Development Commission appoint members to the following offices and committees:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Design Committee
- Mobility Committee

[1] The Advisory Design Panel is an independent body that provides impartial professional advice to Town staff on matters relating to the design of significant development proposals and the relationship between the development proposal and Mammoth Lakes' physical environment.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning and Economic Development Commission

Minutes of Regular Meeting

August 9, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes

Members Present: Chair Michael Vanderhurst, Vice Chair Jennifer Burrows, Commissioner Jessica Kennedy, Commissioner Greg Eckert

Members Absent: Commissioner Paul Chang

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chamber, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Town Manager Daniel C. Holler led the flag salute.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Town Manager Daniel C. Holler thanked Community and Economic Development Director Sandra Moberly for her years of service with the Town.

Code Compliance Officer Jena Carter announced that today was her last day with the Town. She gave an update regarding current code compliance activities. There was discussion among members of the Commission and staff.

4. PRESENTATION

4.1 Update on the Eastern Sierra Climate and Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP) (Mammoth Donut)

Janet Hatfield, Whitebark Institute, gave an update regarding the Eastern Sierra Climate & Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP).

Office of Outdoor Recreation Manager Lawson Reif outlined the ESCCRP 2023 Town Parcels Fuels Reduction projects.

There was discussion among members of the Commission, staff, and Ms. Hatfield.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6. BUSINESS MATTERS

6.1 Mammoth Main Base Redevelopment Project Update (Mammoth Mountain Main Lodge)

Community and Economic Development Director Sandra Moberly outlined the information in the staff report. There was discussion among members of the Commission and staff.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Commissioner Jessica Kennedy
Seconded by Commissioner Greg Eckert

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (4): Chair Michael Vanderhurst, Vice Chair Jennifer Burrows, Commissioner Jessica Kennedy, and Commissioner Greg Eckert

Absent (1): Commissioner Paul Chang

Carried (4 to 0)

7.1 Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 12, 2023.

8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Eckert asked for a Fact Sheet regarding Snowcreek Golf Course. There was discussion among members of the Commission and staff.

Chair Vanderhurst reported that the OCR (Obstacle Course Racing) World Championships would be coming to Town October 5-9.

9. DIRECTORS REPORT

Community and Economic Development Director Sandra Moberly thanked the Commission for working with her in the last ten years and listed projects and policies that they had worked on together. She reported that Senior Planner - Housing Coordinator Nolan Bobroff would be the Commission liaison until a new director was brought on. There was discussion among members of the Commission and staff.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission adjourned the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

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Jamie Gray, Town Clerk