

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Town Council Presentation

November 2026

hunden partners

Why We're Here

The goal of the Destination Stewardship Plan is to give Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) and the Town of Mammoth Lakes an integrated, cross-agency framework that aligns destination product, infrastructure, economic development, and community investment around shared goals.



PURPOSE AND GOALS

ALIGNMENT

Coordinate the Town, MLT, agencies, and partners around shared priorities and reduce duplication

ACCOUNTABILITY

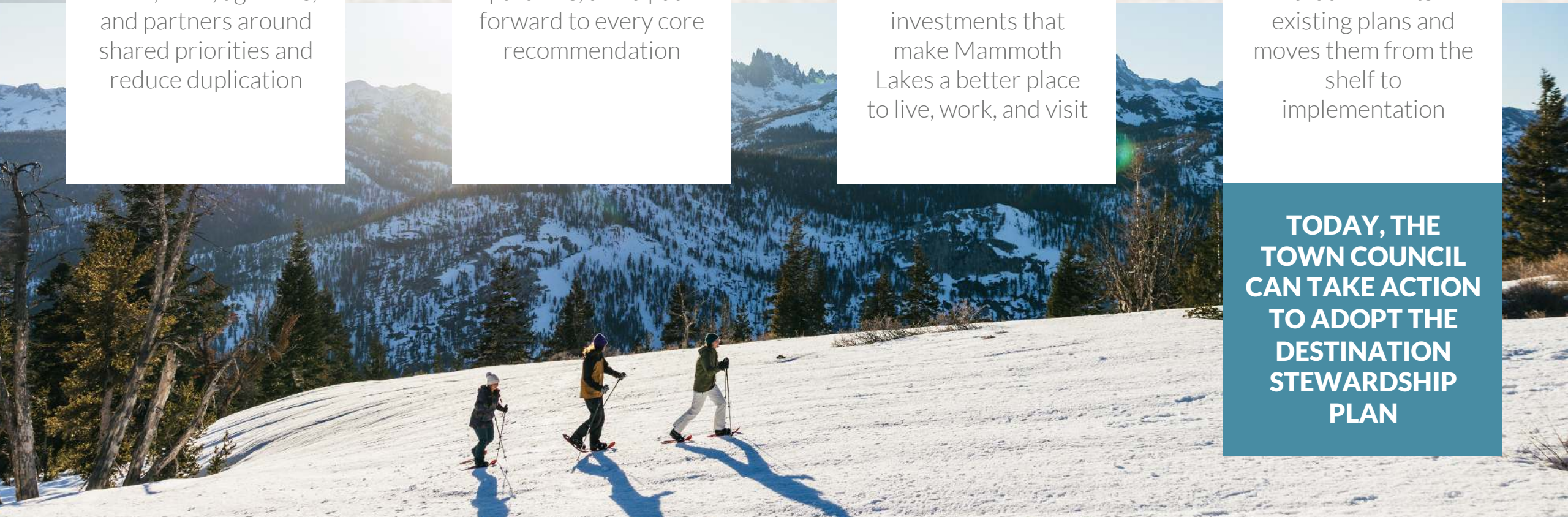
Assign a lead, partners, and a path forward to every core recommendation

INVESTMENT

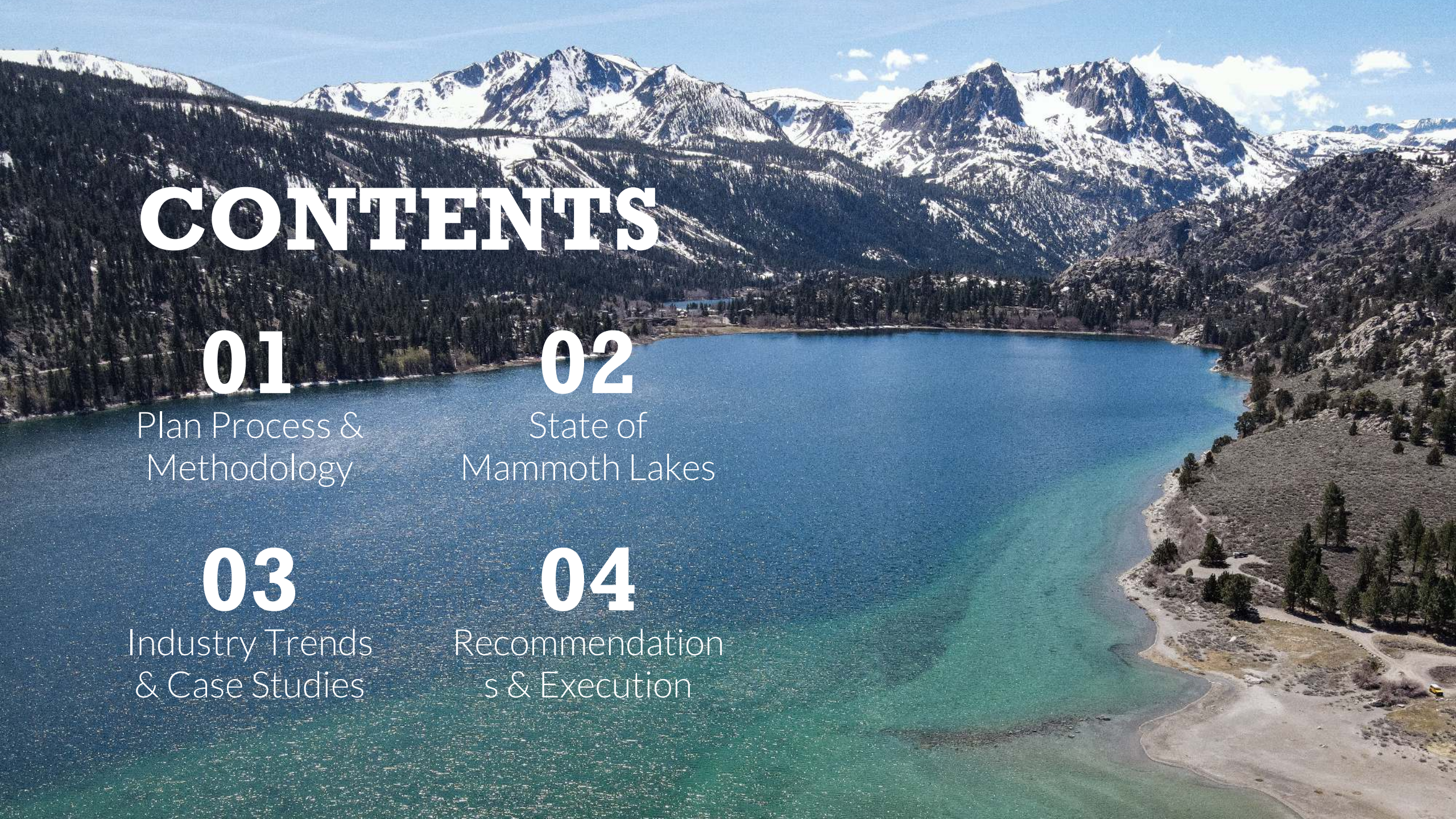
Prioritize data-informed investments that make Mammoth Lakes a better place to live, work, and visit

ACTION

Adopt a framework that connects existing plans and moves them from the shelf to implementation



TODAY, THE TOWN COUNCIL CAN TAKE ACTION TO ADOPT THE DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN



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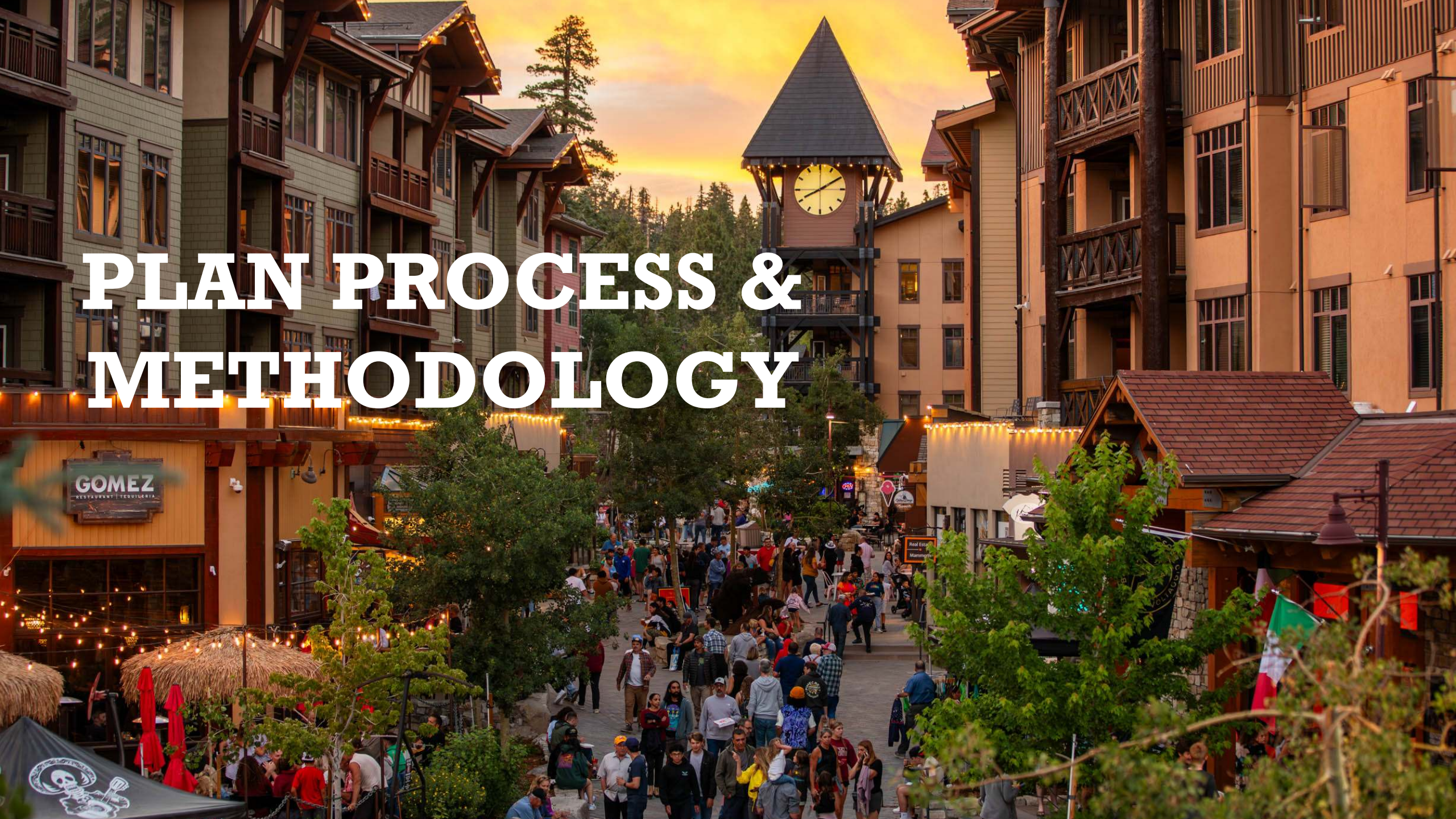

PLAN PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

Research Framework

A Unified, Data-driven Approach

Engaged residents, businesses, agencies, and Town leadership from July 2025 through January 2026

Synthesized existing Town plans, including the General Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Trail System Master Plan, and housing studies, rather than duplicating them

Analyzed visitor spending, lodging, TOT, TBID, and municipal revenue data, along with resident sentiment research

Benchmarked Steamboat Springs and Telluride, Colorado, and Lake Tahoe, California and Nevada, for governance, funding, and housing models that informed the recommendations



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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

COMPREHENSIVE PARTICIPATION

100+ Stakeholder Touchpoints

25+ Individual Interviews and Meetings

70+ Residents Engaged at Public Events

4 Community Engagement Sessions

2 In-Market Site Visits Conducted

3 Engagement Phases, July 2025 – Jan 2026

WHO WE HEARD FROM



Town Leadership

Town Council members, Town staff, and the Mammoth Lakes Police Department



Local Community

Residents and business owners, including a bilingual Hispanic Business Coalition session



Public Agencies

Inyo National Forest, Mono County, Mammoth Hospital, fire, water, and housing agencies



Industry Partners

MLT, Mammoth Mountain, the Chamber, lodging, and real estate partners

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

July 2025

1

Project initiation with Town leadership

Sept – Oct 2025

2

Four-day site visit and community engagement

Through Jan 2026

3

In-person working sessions

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Key Themes

Stakeholders consistently identified four pressures: housing, community benefit, infrastructure, and year-round business activity. Each theme informs one or more of the Plan's three priority areas, along with the strategy to deliver them.



HOUSING

Housing is the binding constraint: out of approximately 9,000 units, 80% are condominiums. The missing-middle households lack viable pathways.



COMMUNITY BENEFIT

TOT provides 66% of General Fund revenue, yet only 41% of 2026 Resident Sentiment Survey respondents believe tourism's benefits outweigh its impacts.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Parking, restroom, transit, and trail maintenance gaps strain peak periods at the Lakes Basin, Canyon Lodge, and the Village.



ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Shoulder-season losses, essential service gaps such as pharmacy access, and permitting friction weaken year-round business.

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STATE OF
MAMMOTH LAKES

Destination Snapshot

KEY CONTEXT

1.8M annual visits in 2024 and 2025

4,700+ hotel and condo rooms, plus STRs

7,200 residents vs. 11,000 projected



BY THE NUMBERS

$29.7M

FY 2025-26 TOT revenue,
66% of the General Fund

400

DEED-RESTRICTED
workforce housing units

94%

of Mono County is
PUBLIC LAND

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Destination SWOT Summary

Mammoth Lakes has a national brand and dedicated funding, but some of its greatest challenges, including workforce housing and peak-period crowding, span multiple organizations and cannot be addressed by any one entity alone.



STRENGTHS

- National brand
- Durable dedicated funding: Measures R and U, TBID, and TOT
- Capable DMO, and active federal land partnerships



WEAKNESSES

- Fragmented planning
- Difficult business operating environment
- Workforce housing shortage
- Peak-period pinch points



OPPORTUNITIES

- North Village capacity
- Shoulder-season programming
- Second-homeowner engagement
- Visitor technology



THREATS

- Snowpack volatility and wildfire risk
- Forest Service staffing attrition
- Plan fatigue
- Costs rising faster than revenue

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Mammoth Lakes' Core Visitor Segments

Mammoth Lakes serves a diverse visitor mix whose behaviors, spending patterns, and infrastructure demands vary significantly by season and segment.

Winter Ski and Snowboard Visitors are the largest and highest-yield segment, driving peak occupancy, daily rates, and most TOT revenue, but are the most exposed to snowpack volatility.

Summer Outdoor Recreation Visitors have increased meaningfully over the past decade and align most naturally with stewardship messaging, but concentrate congestion in the Lakes Basin.

Regional Drive-Market Visitors from the Los Angeles basin, the Bay Area, the Central Valley, and Nevada shape the summer and shoulder seasons and respond to events.

Second Homeowners are at once visitors, lodging supply, a source of private capital, and prospective residents, an underleveraged opportunity.

Group, Event, and Meeting Visitors remain a modest segment, constrained by the absence of a purpose-built conference facility.



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PRIORITY
FRAMEWORK

Three Priority Areas

The Plan's recommendations reflect the following areas: what draws people to Mammoth Lakes, how that activity is managed, and how the community benefits.

01 THE MAMMOTH EXPERIENCE

Maintain recreation assets to a high standard, manage visitation and capacity, improve mobility and access, elevate public realm corridors, and strengthen partnerships.

02 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Establish a dedicated economic development function, retain essential businesses, recruit operators that fill documented gaps, and build a more resilient economy.

03 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Expand missing-middle workforce housing, establish a public shared accountability framework, and advance land use opportunities that prioritize community benefit.



STEWARDSHIP:
The intentional management of and care for Mammoth Lakes and its surrounding landscapes, applied across all three priority areas.

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The Mammoth Experience

The Town leads execution, with MLT, the Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Mountain, and Mono County as essential co-implementers.

RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE: Develop a cross-boundary capital improvement plan with the Forest Service and maintain assets to one high standard.

VISITATION MANAGEMENT: Launch a unified visitor communication system, expand the host program, and deploy trail counters and parking sensors.

MOBILITY, PARKING, AND ACCESS: Implement real-time mobility information, phase parking expansion, pilot microtransit, and deploy e-bike infrastructure.

PLACEMAKING: Continue public realm improvements on Main Street and Old Mammoth Road and coordinate Village and resort corridor infrastructure planning.

PARTNERSHIPS: Formalize partnerships with the Inyo National Forest, the Bishop Paiute Tribe, Mono County, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.



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Economic Development and Small Business

The Town and the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce share the lead, with MLT supporting marketing, branding, and promotion.

Dedicated Economic Development Office would coordinate small business programming, recruitment, and succession and should be operational within the first two years.

Retail Retention and Targeted Recruitment would protect at-risk essential businesses and recruit operators that fill gaps, such as a full-service pharmacy.

Business Concierge Onboarding would guide new and expanding businesses through permitting, paired with multilingual business training.

Centralized Employee Staffing Pool would give participating businesses a shared bench of qualified workers for seasonal surges.

Succession Initiative and Incubator Fund would connect retiring owners with local buyers and channel second-homeowner capital into local businesses.



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Community Investment

The Town leads, with Eastern Sierra Community Housing, Mammoth Mountain, Mammoth Hospital, Mammoth Unified School District, and major employers as co-investors.



MISSING-MIDDLE HOUSING

Households earning 80% – 150% of area median income fall between affordable and market-rate housing. **A multi-employer housing fund would pool land and financing to develop deed-restricted units.**



SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

A publicly reported matrix would track commitments by the Town, MLT, the Resort, and partners, including housing units delivered, programming funded, and local hiring, reviewed annually.



AIRPORT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Investments at Mammoth Yosemite Airport should focus on **fixed base operator upgrades and a public safety complex**, including CAL FIRE aviation operations.

Community investment and destination investment are not competing priorities; each strengthens the other.

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Council Priorities

Many of the Plan's recommendations, including missing-middle housing, wildfire resilience, and cross-boundary capital planning, align with priorities the Council has already established. Adopting the Plan would advance work already underway.



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Mammoth Yosemite Airport public safety upgrades
- Continued wildfire resilience investment
- Unified visitor communication and host programs



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

- Missing-middle workforce housing
- Stronger multi-agency partnerships
- Townwide beautification and economic development support



MUNICIPAL SERVICES

- Integrates recommendations from prior plans
- North Village infrastructure planning
- Cross-boundary capital plan and Shared Accountability Matrix



RECREATION AMENITIES

- Regional recreation district exploration
- Short- and long-term connectivity solutions
- Public lands, wildlife, and Tribal partnerships

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FISCAL STEWARDSHIP & EXECUTION

Funding Toolkit

TOT flows to the General Fund according to Town Council-adopted strategic priorities and commitments, and the TBID currently supports destination marketing and visitor education rather than broader stewardship. Peer mountain communities use the tools below to close that gap:

STR housing mitigation fee grounded in a local displacement-cost analysis, with revenue dedicated to workforce housing

TBID reauthorization that may authorize stewardship implementation and community impact mitigation as eligible uses, as needed and advisable by the MLT board

Dedicated stewardship funding from the appropriate mix of General Fund, Tourism Reserve Fund, grant, partner, and TBID resources

Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District (EIFD) for the Village and resort corridor

Air service funding, regional housing authority expansion, Measures R and U scope evaluation, and state recreation funding advocacy



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Governance and Accountability

Each priority area has a designated lead responsible for advancing progress and reporting results, with partners supporting implementation. A Stewardship Council coordinates the leads across all three areas.



STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

- A chartered, staffed, and neutrally facilitated forum of the Town, MLT, Inyo National Forest, Mono County, Mammoth Mountain, and partners



MAMMOTH EXPERIENCE

- **Lead:** The Town
- **Partners:** MLT, the Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Mountain, and Mono County



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Lead:** The Town and the Chamber of Commerce
- **Partners:** MLT for marketing and promotion



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

- **Lead:** The Town
- **Partners:** Eastern Sierra Community Housing and anchor employers

The proposed Council would not replace existing authorities; it would align priorities and sustain momentum across budget cycles and leadership transitions.

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Five-Year Action Plan

The following phased action items sequence the Vision's priorities based on institutional readiness, funding availability, and dependency between recommendations.

Years 1–2

ESTABLISH THE FOUNDATION

Form the Destination Stewardship Council, establish dedicated funding, launch the STR fee feasibility analysis, stand up economic development, and convene the employer housing group.

Years 3–4

INVEST IN PRIORITIES

Expand transit and Lakes Basin parking, launch visitor communication, advance public realm work, introduce the STR fee if authorized, and begin Village corridor planning.

Year 5

EVALUATE, ADAPT, AND RENEW

Review progress against the Shared Accountability Matrix, publish a public stewardship report, and identify the appropriate funding mix to sustain implementation ahead of TBID reauthorization.





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