MAMMOTH LAKES RECREATION

Title: Fiscal Year 2025/26 Mammoth Lakes Recreation Measure U Arts and Culture Programming and Special Event Transit Service Funding Recommendations.

Meeting Date: April 1, 2026

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the Resolution Approving Measure U (Fund 217) allocations for Fiscal Year 2025/26 Programming and Special Event Transit Service funding recommendations in the amount of $210,749.50.

**BACKGROUND:**

Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR) is a non-profit organization that is committed to preserving and enriching the quality of life for residents and visitors by ensuring the strategic use of Measure R and Measure U funds to develop and support recreation, arts and culture, mobility, capital projects and special projects in Mammoth Lakes. MLR is the recommending body for Measure R and Measure U and conducts the allocation process annually with funding recommendations presented to Town Council for review, and approval as recommended or with modification.

The stated broad objective of the funding process is as follows: *"Measure R & U Funds will be recommended or funds invested to create, implement and support a branded high-performance destination that includes a thriving arts & culture community and enhanced recreation opportunities."*

**ANALYSIS:**

**Arts and Culture Programming**

The recommendation of specific allocations for arts and culture programming is determined through an extensive public review process. Applications are evaluated for alignment with the Broad Objective, Guiding Principles and Priority Elements of the MLR Strategic Plan and scored in the following ten (10) areas: Project Readiness/Schedule, Community Engagement, Economic Impact, Environmental Impact, Affordability, Recreation and/or Arts & Culture Value, Partnership, Improved Access, TOML Strategic Plans and Priorities, and Overall Impact and Community Benefit.

The MLR Allocations Committee held a public meeting on February 11, 2026, to review applications and offer the applicants the opportunity to address the Committee. All applications were reviewed at this meeting and funding recommendations determined. On March 10, 2026, the MLR Allocations Committee presented those recommendations to the MLR Board. One applicant petitioned the Board to revise their organizations' recommendation, which was granted.

- $225,000 is budgeted for FY2025/26 Measure U Programming.
- The application period opened January 5 and closed January 31, 2026.

- There were 11 applicants.
- Funding was recommended for eight (8) applications.
- A total of $185,749.50 in funding is recommended.

The MLR Board is recommending Town Council approve by resolution Measure U expenditures of $185,749.50 in arts and culture programming for eight (8) local recreation, arts, and culture organizations from the FY2025/26 Measure U fund balance. Measure U funding recommendations for programming are included below in Table 1 and in the attached resolution.

**Table 1 - Arts and Culture Programming Funding Recommendations**

| *Organization* | *Funding Recommendation* |
|---|---|
| **Chamber Music Unbound** | $40,000.00 |
| **Eastern Sierra Arts Alliance** | $41,000.00 |
| **Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center** | $11,500.00 |
| **Eastern Sierra Community Chorus** | $8,500.00 |
| **Mono Arts Council** | $50,587.50 |
| **Sierra Classic Theater** | $9,000.00 |
| **Sierra STEM** | $14,000.00 |
| **Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve** | $11,162.00 |
| **Total Measure U Funding Request** | **$185,749.50** |

**Special Event Transit Service Funding Recommendations**

Measure U funds have been allocated for the past several years to support large-scale special events in Mammoth Lakes. These funds have been utilized to pay for enhanced transit (mobility) services to meet the additional short-term demand of large-scale special events. The primary goal of offering complimentary transit services for event participants is to reduce the number of vehicles traveling in and around the special event venue. The secondary purpose is to not impact or degrade existing Town-wide transit services.

The Town has previously managed this program in coordination with Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR) with an annual allocation of $25,000. These funds have been utilized historically by the Mammoth Festival of Beers and Bluesapalooza, Night of Lights, and most recently Mammoth Trailfest. This year, event organizers requested funds for The Monster Energy Mammoth Motocross and The Mammoth.

To equitably address these additional funding requests and to ensure sufficient funds are available to support these large-scale special events and to meet the goals of the program, the Town and MLR developed an online application form[1] open to all eligible special events. To be eligible for this funding, the event must be deemed a "Special Event" and submit a Special Event Administrative Permit Application to the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

For the purposes of the application process, only large scale, ticketed events (Mammoth Lakes Tourism "Tier 1" Events) of more than 1,000 people at one time, that drive visitation, and are considered significant economic drivers to the region outside of a 100+ mile radius, and engage in expansive marketing efforts are eligible to apply. Non-ticketed or small community events are not

[1] Click HERE to review the Measure U Special Event Transit Funding Application Form.

eligible for funding. **The event must meet the MLT "Tier 1" criteria, but does not need to receive funding from Mammoth Lakes Tourism.* In addition, a maximum request of $10,000 per event was introduced.

Town and MLR staff are requesting Town Council consider the approval of the Special Event Transit Funding recommendations as presented in Table 2 below from the FY2025/26 Measure U Fund balance.

**The Measure U fund balance at the close of this fiscal year is projected to be $275,500. Additionally, MLR is recommending $185,749.50 of the $225,000 allocated for programming grants, adding $39,000 to the projected fund balance.**

Town and MLR staff have reviewed each application and confirmed their eligibility for funding.

- $25,000 is budgeted from the FY2025/26 Measure U fund balance for Special Event Transit Service.
- The application period opened mid-January and closed on February 28, 2026.
- There were five (5) applicants requesting a total of $35,000.
- The Town was notified by Rich Sherman from Omega Events on March 23 that the 2026 Mammoth Festival of Beers & Bluesapalooza has been postponed, with the event now tentatively planned for July 29 – August 1, 2027.
- Funding is recommended for all applicants excluding the Mammoth Festival of Beers and Bluesapalooza.
- A total of $25,000 is recommended for award.
- Staff anticipate an increase of $10,000 in Special Event Transit Funding for the FY 2026/27 Measure U budget totaling $35,000.

The applications are available for review upon request.

Table 2 represents the Special Event Transit Funding applications and funding recommendations approved by the Mammoth Lakes Recreation Board of Directors on March 10, 2026.

**Table 2 – Special Event Transit Funding Recommendations**

| *Event* | *Event Dates* | *Number of Attendees* | *Funding Request* | *Funding Recommendation* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Monster Energy Mammoth Motocross** | June 19-28 | 6,500 | $10,000 | $10,000 |
| ~~**Mammoth Festival of Beers and Bluesapalooza**~~ | ~~July 31-August 2~~ | ~~6,400~~ | ~~$10,000~~ | ~~$10,000~~ |
| **Mammoth TrailFest** | September 24-27 | 6,000 | $10,000 | $10,000 |
| **The Mammoth** | October 2-6 | 2,500 | $2,000 | $2,000 |
| **Night of Lights** | December 12 | 3,500 | $3,000 | $3,000 |
| **Total Measure U Funding Request** | | | **$35,000** | **$25,000** |

These awards are all conditional upon the issuance of an Administrative Special Event Permit by the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the execution of an agreement between the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the funding recipient.

**Attachments:**

A. Measure U Arts and Culture Programming Funding Recommendations.
B. Measure U Special Event Transit Service Funding Recommendations.
C. Resolution 26-XX FY2025/26 Measure U Programming and Transit Service Recommendations.