

**MONO COUNTY COLLABORATIVE PLANNING TEAM**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**BASED UPON SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL'S**

**Planning for Prosperity:  
Building Communities in the Sierra Nevada**

**ACCEPTED BY THE MONO COUNTY  
COLLABORATIVE PLANNING TEAM**

**May 1999**



# MONO COUNTY COLLABORATIVE PLANNING TEAM

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### INTRODUCTION

The Mono County Collaborative Planning Team (MCCPT) has developed the following principles based upon similar principles promoted by the Sierra Business Council in its publication "Planning for Prosperity: Building Communities in the Sierra Nevada." The MCCPT will use these principles, and recommends that participating agencies use these principles, to address community open-space interface issues.

The following states each guiding principle and notes the local issues related to the principle that were identified in a facilitated MCCPT "brainstorming" session. A brief discussion of how the principle applies to the Mono County region follows, and in some instances, specific action statements are included.

## ***PRINCIPLE 1***

***Safeguard the rural character of the Sierra Nevada by maintaining a clear edge between town and country.***

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. The Mono County General Plan does not delineate a clear edge around community areas on its land use maps. Although it encourages development in and adjacent to existing communities, it does not have a clearly stated policy concerning a "clear edge."
2. It is unclear where Town of Mammoth Lakes uses end and country uses begin; as an example, the airport expansion and proposed industrial park uses that primarily serve the town are located outside the townsite.
3. In defining the "clear edge," setting and context must be considered along with compatibility of uses. Community needs may outweigh the "clear edge."
4. Private property rights must also be considered when defining the "clear edge" and desirable uses outside community areas.
5. There is a need to delineate uses that would be desirable outside community areas; i.e., "county development" or "country uses." These uses could include ranching, resorts, dispersed recreation, etc.
6. There is a need to determine how the Scenic Highway Corridor works with the concept of a clear edge.
7. Public lands adjacent to community areas should be made available for private growth and development using a variety of approaches, including right of way, land exchanges, permits, and land values.
8. Coordinated planning with the county General Plan is not always possible; e.g., ski areas, deer herd management plans, campgrounds, etc.
9. The wetland mitigation program ("wetland bank") can help maintain a clear edge in some community areas.

### **DISCUSSION**

Each community must define its "clear edge." The clear edge may vary from community to community depending on local issues and circumstances. For instance, community needs and property rights may influence the clarity of the edge. A collaborative land-adjustment program among MCCPT members may assist in establishing and maintaining the clear edge for communities.

A major consideration in defining the edge is the travelers' view as they approach a community. Maintaining the "rural" character outside the communities as viewed from scenic roads and

highways is a critical element of this principle. Collaboration in permitting and managing land uses compatible with the rural setting is necessary.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Amend the Mono County General Plan, including the land-use maps, to address the issue of a “clear edge” around all community areas.
2. Amend the Mono County General Plan and the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan to clarify the “clear edge” in the area surrounding the town, particularly for the airport and surrounding industrial uses.
3. Identify public and private lands in Mono County that may have land use conflicts and lands that may be available to meet community needs, emphasizing areas within the community interface.
4. Develop a collaborative countywide guide to land use that lists a range of opportunities for land use rather than a list of constraints (not a “no” but a “where-we-want-to-be description”).
5. In defining the clear edge, determine how the Scenic Highway Corridor works with the concept of a clear edge.
6. Expedite the land-exchange process through implementation of a Master Land Adjustment Plan. The MCCPT should play a role in facilitating changes in the land exchange process. The Master Land Adjustment Plan should include a standard set of criteria for determining appropriate and priority land adjustments.
7. Identify areas where the wetland mitigation program could help maintain a clear edge.

## ***PRINCIPLE 2***

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### ***Preserve historic assets.***

#### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. State and federal laws clearly state requirements for preserving and maintaining historic and cultural resources on public and private lands in Mono County.
2. Historic assets include physical remains, such as those found at Bodie State Historic Park, as well as land uses and practices, such as ranching activities in the Bridgeport Valley.
3. There is a need to complete a comprehensive inventory of historic and cultural resources in the county. Resources on some public lands have been inventoried but there is no comprehensive countywide inventory. The BLM's Resource Management Plan process included cultural resource inventories and recommendations on management practices for resources on lands managed by the BLM.
4. The current public attitude in the county is not conducive to identifying and preserving historic and cultural resources. There is a need to educate the public, including residents, visitors, and property owners on the inherent value of the county's historic and cultural assets. The economic value of these assets, in terms of their ability to attract visitor dollars, should be acknowledged.
5. There is an opportunity to develop incentive programs for preservation of historic and cultural assets in the county.
6. The Mono County General Plan contains policies that address the need to pursue cultural resource inventories, public education programs, and incentive programs for preservation.
7. The Mono County Arts Council has compiled information on historic and cultural resources in the county and on sources of money for cultural resource preservation and management.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Historical and other cultural resources are regulated by existing federal and state laws. Cultural resources have been inventoried and addressed in some MCCPT members' planning and management documents. Studies such as the one recently prepared by the Mono County Arts Council have documented the value - including economic value - of our cultural resources.

Private efforts aimed at the restoration of historic structures are under way throughout the county, including Old Benton, Fales Hot Springs, Coleville, and along U.S. 395 near the shores of Mono Lake. Recent public collaborative efforts include support for the acquisition and preservation of historical structures in the Bodie area.

A comprehensive cultural resource inventory and coordinated regional policy do not currently exist for Mono County. The Mono County General Plan directs that programs for cultural resource inventories, education, and incentives for preservation should be pursued.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Ensure that state and federal requirements for preserving and maintaining cultural resources are met.
2. Work with the Mono County Arts Council, local planning commissions, Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPACs), and appropriate agencies to develop a comprehensive cultural resource inventory for the county.
3. Create opportunities to interpret historic and cultural resources and to educate the public concerning their value.
3. Create an incentive program for property owners to preserve, restore (where appropriate), and maintain historic and cultural resources on their property.
4. Document the economic value of historic and cultural assets, educate landowners and the general public concerning these benefits, and promote cultural tourism programs where appropriate.

### **PRINCIPLE 3**

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*Build to create enduring value and beauty.*

#### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. This principle can be addressed in community plan policies and development standards, such as design guidelines. Private developers can play a major role by developing projects of high quality that respect the character, culture, and environmental setting of a community.
2. A project with "enduring value and beauty" is defined as one that will be of continuing and long-lasting worth and utility to the community and the county, and one that has continuing, long-lasting aesthetic appeal and that blends in with its surrounding environment.
3. State and federal agencies can help the County adhere to this principle by considering this principle when developing projects on their lands or leasing their lands to others for development.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The principle of building to create enduring value is primarily applicable to local general purpose governments such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County. This principle is best addressed in the policies and development permit processes of local communities. Collaborative Planning Team members should be sensitive to this principle at the time their public facilities are designed within or near communities.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Refine Mono County General Plan development standards and design guidelines and implement them in a consistent manner.
2. Work with private developers to ensure that projects respect the character, culture, and environmental setting of a community.
3. Ensure that agency decision makers and developers adhere to this principle during the design of new structures and facilities.
4. Continue the present collaboration between Mono County and the USFS to protect scenic values in Mono Basin.
5. Continue to manage visual impacts to enhance scenic values (all agencies).



## ***PRINCIPLE 4***

***Enhance the economic vitality of our small towns through ongoing reinvestment in the downtown core.***

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Downtown core reinvestment can be encouraged through community plan policies, local agency capital improvements and private sector investments.
2. Mono County General Plan policies direct development to occur within existing community areas as a method to promote economic growth.
3. Local, state and federal agencies can look for opportunities to site facilities within community areas. For example: Lee Vining is a staging area for Yosemite National Park. How can the community be involved in providing facilities and services within Lee Vining for Yosemite visitors and employees? Agencies should consider the potential community economic benefits that could result from the siting or reuse of their facilities within local communities.
4. Reinvestment in and enhancement of existing community areas is a corollary to Principle 1 - developing a "clear edge" between communities and the surrounding country.
5. "Rural development" grants may be potential funding sources for various improvements for community core areas in the county.

### **DISCUSSION**

Mono County communities possess a variety of downtown core area characteristics. June Lake, Lee Vining and Bridgeport are characterized by older, concise, pedestrian-scale core areas. The small settlements of Coleville, Old Benton and McGee Creek possess historic core areas that are in the initial stages of revitalization. Other communities, such as Walker, the Crowley settlements, and Mammoth Lakes to a certain extent, have less of a traditional core area and more of a dispersed commercial pattern.

Reinvestment in these downtown core areas is critical to the revitalization and stabilization of local tourist economies, and efforts are under way in several Mono County communities to enhance their core areas. In concert with Caltrans and other agencies, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Crowley, June Lake, Lee Vining, and Bridgeport have secured public funds to improve streetscapes and to improve or add sidewalks, bike paths, and visitor kiosks. Although these and other efforts often have been initiated at the local government level, collaboration and partnerships with others, including MCCPT member agencies, will continue to be of critical importance.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Work with interested communities, private developers, and local governmental agencies to develop downtown revitalization strategies.

2. Work with local, state and federal agencies to coordinate downtown revitalization with the facility plans of agencies.
3. Promote the connection between downtown revitalization and maintaining a “clear edge” for community areas.
4. Look for potential grants for downtown revitalization projects such as sidewalks in Lee Vining and June Lake.

## **PRINCIPLE 5**

*Anticipate and address the housing needs of all community residents.*

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. This is primarily a county-community/Town of Mammoth Lakes issue.
2. Communities should acknowledge that their growth potential is not unlimited.
3. Agencies should look for opportunities to participate in addressing housing needs.
4. The Mono County General Plan and the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan, in their Housing Elements, contain direction concerning the provision of housing for all residents. These policies should be coordinated closely.

### **DISCUSSION**

As Mono County continues to grow, communities need to anticipate and address the housing needs of residents. Employees of local businesses should have convenient access to housing they can afford. Long-standing local residents should also be able to afford to remain in their communities.

As the pace of development in Mammoth Lakes and other communities accelerates, the need for addressing regional housing needs will increase. Given the limited private land base of many Mono County communities, collaboration among public agencies will be necessary to ensure that community growth occurs in a concise and orderly manner, consistent with these principles.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Continue to refine community policies to address the limitations on growth in community areas.
2. Explore methods for agencies, including local governments, to collaborate on addressing housing needs.
3. Continue to refine and implement the Housing Elements in the general plans of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County.

## ***PRINCIPLE 6***

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***Conserve and showcase each community's natural assets.***

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Communities in Mono County have a wealth of surrounding natural assets.
2. The need to conserve natural assets is similar to the need to preserve historic and cultural resource assets (see Principle 2).
3. Land management agencies have a central role in conserving natural assets since most of the "assets" are on public lands.
4. Education concerning compatible uses of those assets and appropriate marketing of those assets is essential to conserve them.
5. The need to conserve natural assets in areas immediately surrounding communities must be balanced with the need to provide adequate housing, infrastructure, and economic growth opportunities, as discussed in other principles in this document.
6. Natural assets that must be conserved include viewsheds, watersheds, water and associated ecosystems, and wildlife resources.
7. There is a need to educate the public, including residents, visitors, and property owners on the inherent value of the county's natural assets. The economic value of these assets, in terms of their ability to attract visitor dollars, should be acknowledged.
7. There may be opportunities to conserve natural assets through the land adjustment (exchange) process.
8. There is a need to determine how the wilderness-designation process may affect Principle 6.

### **DISCUSSION**

The spectacular visual resources of the Mono County region are a primary attraction for residents and visitors. With over 94% of the region in public ownership, the vast amount of public open space defines and enriches life in Mono County. Each community possesses unique natural assets that should be conserved and showcased. Since many of these assets are on public land, collaboration with land management agencies to identify and conserve natural features is essential.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Promote public education programs concerning the value and appropriate uses of natural assets.
2. Coordinate education and promotion activities with the Coalition for Unified Recreation in the Eastern Sierra (CURES).

3. Agencies should work with communities and local chambers of commerce to conserve and "showcase" natural assets by helping to direct recreational use and other uses on public lands.
4. Document the economic value of natural assets and promote ecotourism programs, where appropriate.
5. Use the Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPACs) to assist in an inventory of local natural assets.
6. Identify areas where the land adjustment (exchange) process could help conserve natural assets.
7. Investigate how the wilderness designation process may affect this principle.

## ***PRINCIPLE 7***

***Maintain the economic productivity of our region's agricultural lands and forests.***

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Economic productivity of agricultural lands can be a concern with DWP lands and ranch lands in the Bridgeport Valley and other agricultural areas of Mono County.
2. Agencies can help maintain agricultural productivity by providing easements and partnerships.
3. There is a need to educate landowners on the value of private "ranch" lands.
4. Upland habitat can be lost if housing development occurs on agricultural lands at the edges of valleys.
5. There is a need to develop programs to assist landowners in diversifying their agricultural production.
6. Exportation of water is a concern. Mono County's new groundwater ordinance will require extensive environmental studies of water exportation proposals.
7. Forest and rangeland health can be impacted by a variety of allowed practices.
8. Grazing practices are a concern on agricultural lands, forest lands, and rangelands.

### **DISCUSSION**

Agriculture, in the form of livestock and major crops, remains an important component of Mono County's economy. Strong support for preservation of the region's agricultural resources has been expressed by local RPACs and is reflected in the policies of the county General Plan and community plans. Communities value agricultural land for its economic productivity, its visual quality, and its importance in sustaining natural systems by providing plant and wildlife habitat, migration corridors, watershed protection, and other benefits.

Local forests have limited value for timber production and few, if any, local jobs are provided by the timber industry. The forest resource provides fuelwood cutting for local commercial operators and private individuals. The forest resource economic value is tied more to tourism than to timber production.

Plans to maintain the economic productivity of agricultural lands in Mono County should focus on developing a diversified agricultural base that is sustainable over time.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Work with the Sierra Business Council to conduct a workshop for ranchers on methods and financial incentives for sustaining local agricultural production.
2. Explore conservation easements and other mechanisms of preserving agricultural uses.

3. Develop and implement programs to educate landowners on the value of private “ranch” lands.
4. Pursue land adjustments (exchanges) that would maintain agricultural productivity.
5. Explore methods of diversifying local agricultural production in order to maintain long-term sustainability and disseminate this information to agricultural landowners.
6. Encourage the Cooperative Extension Office to explore alternative agricultural practices and to disseminate this information to agricultural landowners.
7. Educate landowners concerning the use of good soil conservation practices and encourage their use.
8. Emphasize management actions on public lands that maintain long-term sustainability of agricultural uses.

## ***PRINCIPLE 8***

***Do not place people and structures in harm's way.***

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Mono County is *full* of hazards.
2. Avalanche hazards exist in several areas of the county with existing housing. Land adjustments could reduce the exposure of residential uses to those hazards.
3. Fire hazards exist throughout the county. Fuel breaks around communities and around individual houses could reduce those hazards.
4. Flood hazards impact community areas and highway corridors. Impacted corridors need to be identified to be preserved. Community areas need to be assessed in relationship to dams and flood zones.
5. There are pedestrian/vehicle conflicts in community areas and wildlife/vehicle conflicts at animal crossings in areas outside of highways.
6. Infrastructure is affected by a number of potential hazards - avalanches, rock slides, etc. Single-lane access roads are also a concern in hazard areas.
7. Roads that provide access to or through hazard areas need to be maintained and plowed.
8. Overhead utility lines, particularly EMF lines in community areas and their fire-hazard potential, are a concern.
9. Volcanic and seismic hazards occur throughout the county.
10. Shooting zones around community areas continue to be a conflict.
11. Interactions continue between bears and mountain lions and humans.
12. Numerous hazardous situations exist that involve people and vehicles (icy roadways, lack of appropriate walkways, conflicting mixed uses; e.g., x-country skiers vs. over-the-snow vehicles).

### **DISCUSSION**

As the above listing of issues reveals, Mono County possesses an extraordinary number of natural hazards. The region's small private land base and vast public land holdings present opportunities through collaboration to consolidate private land holdings outside of harm's way.

Human-induced hazards, such as pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, are prevalent in several local tourist-oriented communities. As discussed previously, efforts are under way to improve local pedestrian systems (see also Principle 10).



## **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Identify areas of impact for all hazards.
2. Identify areas where problems might be resolved through land adjustments.
3. Support reductions in fuels near or at community edges.
4. Assess flood hazards in community areas in relationship to dams and flood zones.
5. Conduct relocation and alignments of roadways to avoid hazard areas.
6. Review where pedestrian safety can be increased along and across U.S. 395 and other roadways.
7. Install utility lines underground to reduce hazards.
8. Situate and design development to minimize impacts from seismic hazards.
9. Explore options for establishing shooting areas away from community areas.
10. Educate the public concerning appropriate behavior around wildlife.
11. Actively enforce regulations concerning the feeding of wildlife.
12. Encourage the use of mitigation grants and funds to remove people and structures from hazardous conditions or to reduce the hazardous conditions.

## **PRINCIPLE 9**

*Maintain the health of the natural systems that support life in the Sierra Nevada.*

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Continuing growth and development are impacting natural systems.
2. Various land uses and development impact water quality (surface and ground waters).
3. Development also impacts water supply (surface and ground waters). There is a need to balance human needs for water and the needs of natural systems and wildlife.
4. There is an opportunity to use reclaimed water for irrigation purposes to reduce impacts to local water resources.
5. Restoration and management of wetlands in the county is a concern. Mitigation banking may help with this.
6. Irrigated wetlands habitat is a historic use in some areas of the county; the future maintenance of this acreage is a concern.
7. Increased development impacts air quality.
8. Reclamation of mined lands under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) is an ongoing concern.
9. Too many roads on public lands impact watershed health and fragment habitat. This has become problematic in some areas.
10. The disposal of refuse and the state of existing landfills is a concern.
11. Increasing development impacts sewer and septic system thresholds.
12. Mono County has a number of important wildlife corridors (deer, Pacific flyway) that are impacted by development.
13. Threatened and endangered species may be impacted by development.
14. Endemic species and their associated needs may be impacted by development.
15. Forest health is affected by a variety of practices – reintroduction of fire, thinning, rangeland practices, and watershed practices.
16. Bighorn sheep recovery, particularly in relationship to mountain lion predation, is an issue.
17. Geothermal resources in general are a concern; tapping the resource may be depleting the system.

## **DISCUSSION**

Maintaining the health of our natural systems is essential to human health, to the sustainability of our natural resources, and to the economic stability of the Mono County region. As local communities grow, we need to integrate human ecosystems (housing, transportation, employment, utilities, recreation, and commodities production) and natural ecosystems (watersheds, air basins, plant and animal communities and habitats, fire and flood). The Mono County General Plan calls for concentrating future community development within or adjacent to existing local communities, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan limits community expansion to the existing private land base. Consolidating private land holdings through a collaborative land adjustment program can contain development to existing communities and limit development impacts to natural systems. The region's vast amount of public lands also provides opportunities for natural system preservation and enhancement.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Consider natural systems as a whole, no matter whose jurisdiction, when considering impacts, actions and solutions.
2. Share best management practices and knowledge of ecosystems among agencies and access jurisdictional concerns.
3. Inventory the water supply (ground waters, surface waters, and quality). Identify areas where conflicts in use may exist (no matter the size). Share existing data and information.
4. Consider application of a Master Land Adjustment Plan as one tool that may help solve problems with the health of natural systems in the county.
5. Develop a Bighorn Sheep Recovery Plan, including mountain lion predation control measures, to establish healthy sustainable herds.

## ***PRINCIPLE 10***

***Expand local and regional transportation options to reduce traffic congestion and the intensity of public dependence on the automobile.***

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. This Principle does not imply more roadways; the goal is to reduce congestion and encourage the use of alternative transportation modes.
2. With several local exceptions, Mono County generally lacks traffic congestion; it has traffic conflicts.
3. Proposed transportation improvements should not exacerbate existing wildlife/transportation system conflicts.
4. Proposed transportation system improvements should address land use/transportation conflicts, particularly in community areas.
5. Conflicts exist between vehicles and pedestrians on highways through communities.
6. There are opportunities to continue developing and improving multi-modal transportation options such as pedestrian and bike paths.
7. Methods of increasing pedestrian and bike use, such as incentive programs, are a concern.
8. There is a need to improve air transit services to the region.
9. Local and regional transit options, including shuttle services, could be expanded and connected with other transportation services and facilities, such air transit.
10. Increased access to, and broader dissemination of, information for travelers is a concern.
11. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation Strategy (YARTS) provides opportunities for improved transportation to Yosemite National Park, shuttles, etc.
12. Traffic and safety operations and improvements are needed countywide (e.g., passing lanes, turnouts, more rest areas, etc.).

### **DISCUSSION**

The Mono County region is excessively dependent on the automobile, and currently lacks convenient transit, rail, and air travel options. Communities are adopting a new and more long-term approach to transportation planning that recognizes the social, economic and environmental benefits of reducing dependence on the automobile. Four Mono County communities, in partnership with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission, are currently involved in projects to construct sidewalks and bike paths in community areas. Mono County is also one of five counties in the Yosemite region collaborating with the National Park Service and Caltrans in the development of a Yosemite Area Regional Transportation Strategy

(YARTS) and implementation of a Yosemite Area Traveler Information System (YATI). Local communities are also working with Caltrans to coordinate operational improvement projects with sidewalk and bike path improvements.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Encourage the use of alternative transportation modes.
2. Explore methods of minimizing deer/cattle mortality on highways (e.g., reducing nighttime speeds in critical areas, highway underpasses).
3. Ensure that proposed transportation improvements consider land use/transportation conflicts, particularly in community areas.
4. Plan bike lanes more systematically for highway expansions.
5. Implement regional bike paths.
6. Expand public transportation options, including the existing shuttle system.
7. Continue to participate in the implementation of YATI and other methods of providing information to travelers.
8. Establish a regional transportation system with Yosemite.
9. Support projects in the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) to the California Transportation Commission.
10. Collaborate with Caltrans and Mono County on a corridor study for U.S. 395, and, if needed, for other highways in the county.

## **PRINCIPLE 11**

*Invest public resources and direct private investment to maintain and expand each community's social, natural and financial capital.*

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Public infrastructure development should be reviewed on a comprehensive basis, not project by project.
2. Agencies should look at opportunities to collaborate on facilities, roads, services (fire, etc.), and opportunities to partner with private providers.
3. Agencies need to determine how road improvements for the town and county can be financed and maintained.
4. Infrastructure needs (sewer, transportation services and facilities) for the proposed development at the Mammoth-Yosemite airport need to be addressed.
5. The impacts to natural resources (natural capital) of expanding community infrastructure systems need to be considered in the planning process.
6. Leapfrog development creates expectations and needs for new public infrastructure. To avoid a potentially inefficient use of community capital (Principle 1 in this document), as well as local planning policies, new development ought to occur within or adjacent to existing communities.

### **DISCUSSION**

Local planning policy directs that future community development occur within or adjacent to existing communities. Implementation of this policy should assist in efficiently utilizing existing community capital. Several Mono County communities lack adequate infrastructure and lack the critical population mass to fund and maintain infrastructure networks. Encouraging infill development and coordination of new development infrastructure with existing systems is necessary to build adequate levels of infrastructure and public utilities. There is a need to find sources of public investment to serve and support community infrastructure systems.

### **OPPPORTUNITIES**

1. Review the capital facilities plans of public entities to develop a comprehensive inventory of proposed infrastructure development. Identify areas/projects where agencies can collaborate on providing infrastructure.
2. Determine how to finance and maintain county and town road improvements.
3. Develop a Master Infrastructure Plan for proposed development at the Mammoth-Yosemite airport.
4. Review public and private land uses to identify if they are negatively impacting infrastructure (e.g., roads). Acquire the land on a willing-seller basis if necessary.

5. Consider land-adjustment possibilities to ensure the best use of land and existing infrastructure.
6. Consider community infrastructure needs when developing the Master Land Adjustment Plan discussed elsewhere in this document.
7. Consider developer fees to help fund needed infrastructure. Developer fees should not exceed the costs of the benefits received by the development.

## ***PRINCIPLE 12***

***Integrate land use planning with other planning for community development.***

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Transportation system and corridor needs must be considered during land use planning.
2. There is a need to determine if YARTS and YATI are consistent with local planning documents.
3. Water supply issues must be considered during land use planning.
4. Water supply issues, including fire flows, for the proposed expansion of the Mammoth-Yosemite airport are a concern, particularly as they may affect the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery.
5. The effects of land adjustments (exchanges) on community water supplies need to be considered.
6. In many unincorporated areas of the county there is no infrastructure for community systems (e.g., water, sewer), some of which are included in Special District boundaries.
7. There is a need to involve all affected local governments in the planning process and to ensure that they all agree on community and countywide objectives for land use, resource conservation, economic development, etc.

### **DISCUSSION**

More than 30 special districts, school districts, and general purpose governments serve Mono County communities. In many instances, several local government agencies serve a single small community. Rarely do these local governments conduct joint meetings, meet with RPACs, or coordinate planning efforts. Improved coordination among local government agencies is essential to integrate land use and infrastructure planning, economic development, public safety, education, resource conservation, affordable housing and other community objectives. These objectives in turn should influence local land use and public investment infrastructure decisions.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Continue to coordinate transportation and land use planning.
2. Work with local governments to ensure that water supply and other infrastructure issues are considered during land use planning.
3. Encourage the consolidation of local special districts as a method to improve service coordination. Invite special districts to participate in pertinent discussions.
4. Continue to hold annual MCCPT public forums.



## **PRINCIPLE 13**

*Create efficient and meaningful ways to engage the public in shaping local land use plans.*

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. The Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPACs) serve this purpose throughout the county's communities.
2. The MCCPT should examine other ways to facilitate community involvement in local planning processes.

### **DISCUSSION**

Mono County RPACs have been pointed to as a model for facilitating community involvement in local planning processes. The RPAC system could be improved and streamlined through the use of innovative planning techniques, such as the use of facilitators for community meetings. There is an opportunity to expand community participation in the planning process by offering additional methods of participating such as interaction with a website and e-mail. There is also an opportunity to coordinate RPAC planning efforts with those of the MCCPT.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Develop and implement alternative methods of community involvement in the planning process when appropriate. These methods could include questionnaires, use of the media to inform the public, and use of electronic media such as websites and e-mail to elicit wider participation.
2. Keep the public informed of MCCPT actions and other planning processes, and indicate how they can become involved in the process.
3. Use facilitators for community planning to streamline the process.
4. Streamline planning processes where possible and carry through with implementing actions in a timely manner so that the public maintains interest.
5. Ask people what they want to see in their communities and in the county, what land uses and the visual attributes of those land uses.
6. Utilize websites to inform the public and elicit public participation in the planning process. Explore the MCCPT website and encourage Mono County to develop a site. Ensure that local planning sites are linked to agency sites.

## **PRINCIPLE 14**

*Ensure that general plans and plan implementation documents are thorough, current and consistent.*

### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Keep the plan out in front of people – follow through with policy updates.
2. The Town of Mammoth Lakes' 2005 document, which evaluates the status of the Town's planning documents, is an example of this.
3. Mono County is in the process of integrating its General Plan and Zoning Code to ensure they are consistent and easy to use.
4. Planning documents need to address the issue of maintaining a sense of community.

### **DISCUSSION**

California planning law requires cities and counties to adopt and maintain up-to-date and internally consistent general plans. Changing circumstances, new planning and environmental information, new legal requirements and shifts in public attitudes can all cause planning documents to become outdated. A challenge to all agencies involved in land use management and planning is to stay abreast of the changing environment and to adjust their plans accordingly. Plans that are thorough, current and consistent increase the certainty, predictability, and fairness of the planning process for businesses, private property owners and the general public.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Review various agency and county land management plans for consistency. Amend the plans, if necessary, to address inconsistencies.
2. Develop a vision to guide local, regional, state and federal agencies in developing plan updates.
3. Ensure that the public is aware of, and able to participate in, ongoing plan updates and implementation.
4. Revise county planning documents to address the issue of maintaining a sense of community.

## ***PRINCIPLE 15***

***Build customer satisfaction through efficient and predictable plan implementation.***

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. Once plans are adopted, it is important to implement them efficiently and consistently.
2. The goal should be to provide "one-stop shopping" in order to streamline permitting and environmental review processes for the public. To achieve this goal, agencies need to simplify the permitting and environmental review processes where possible and clarify gray areas where possible.
3. To simplify and clarify one aspect of the permitting and environmental review processes, MCCPT members should develop a consistent approach to requests from the public for special uses/facilities on public and private lands in the county. One method to achieve this would be to develop a collaborative guide that provides a range of opportunities for land use rather than a list of constraints (not a "no" but a "where-we-want-to-be description").
4. The land exchange process should be expedited in order to help achieve a number of the preceding principles in this document. Consolidating private lands around existing communities would allow for additional growth in those areas and would preserve the county's natural, cultural and scenic assets. The MCCPT should play a role in facilitating changes in the land exchange process.
5. Many of the agencies that affect the permitting and environmental review processes in Mono County are located outside the county, in many cases at quite a distance. It becomes difficult to include all these agencies in the streamlining process. If, however, they "buy into" the streamlining process, advances in telecommunications will make it increasingly easy to implement plans efficiently.

### **DISCUSSION**

Once planning documents have been established that represent community priorities, staff should function as facilitators, implementing the plan efficiently and predictably so applicants save time and money. Staff can help to make the process more efficient by reducing unnecessary complexity and costly delays, coordinating with other permitting entities to process common applications concurrently, and collaborating with other agencies on joint environmental documents during common permit processes. County supervisors and other local officials can support efficient plan implementation by minimizing their involvement in routine planning decisions.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Consolidate processes and offices, where feasible, in a collaborative format to provide a seamless delivery of services. Include out-of-county agencies in the process, where feasible. (Agencies with offices in Bishop should move to Mono County.)

2. Develop a collaborative countywide guide to land use that lists a range of opportunities for land use rather than a list of constraints (not a "no" but a "where-we-want-to-be description")?
3. Expedite the land exchange process through implementation of a Master Land Adjustment Plan. The MCCPT should play a role in facilitating changes in the land exchange process.
4. Increase utilization of telecommunications in order to provide efficient service.

## **PRINCIPLE 16**

*Reach across jurisdictions to plan cooperatively for the future.*

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### **ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. There are currently many examples of cooperative inter-jurisdictional planning in Mono County, including the following:

- Mono County Collaborative Planning Team (MCCPT)
- Coalition for Unified Recreation in the Eastern Sierra (CURES)
- Yosemite Area Regional Transportation Strategy (YARTS)
- GIS project
- MCCPT Website

These and other efforts require continued support and resources for their success.

### **DISCUSSION**

The MCCPT is a model effort for more-effective coordination among local, regional, state and federal agencies. The establishment of these common planning principles and the addition of Caltrans and the Town of Mammoth Lakes to the MCCPT will further enhance effective plan coordination. Collaboration should result in a number of planning benefits, including reduced time and costs for processing development applications by businesses and property owners.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Work with YARTS on regional issues.
2. Expand GIS activities.
3. Collaborate with other entities to provide the best science for the area's natural resources and to make the results of applicable studies available in a useful format to all MCCPT members. Collaborate with existing research facilities in the area; e.g., White Mountain Research Station, Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab.