

Snowcreek Master Plan Brief

Setting and Community

The Snowcreek area is located on the southeast portion of town, and is bisected by Old Mammoth Road (Map #1). The property is a high meadow area situated at 7,900 feet. The overall terrain is relatively flat, with a slight rise along the northerly and southerly boundaries. Mammoth Creek runs east to west through the property (Map #2). The large site, with the backdrop of the Sherwin Range to the south, is a popular view area and is defined as an aesthetic resource to the Mammoth Lakes community (Draft EIR for the Updated Master Plan for Snowcreek, April 1981, page IV-11).

South of Old Mammoth Road are areas that are meadow or sagebrush and have been used as pasture land, some of which are being or have been developed (Snowcreek V, VI, and the nine-hole golf course). The land surrounding Snowcreek to the south and east is USFS land that is heavily used for both summer and winter recreation activities. West of the Snowcreek area is the Old Mammoth residential district, which is generally low-density residential (Map #3).

The majority of the Snowcreek area has or is currently being developed. These developments include the residential areas of Snowcreek I, II, III, IV, V and VI, the Snowcreek Athletic Center, and the nine-hole golf course (Map #3). The only areas that are not currently developed or under construction are the Hilltop/Snowcreek VII parcel and the area previously designated as the “full-service village center.” The previously proposed village area is located south of Old Mammoth Road and east of Fairview Drive (Map #4).

Chronology

Tom Dempsey, the original developer of Snowcreek, began construction in the area in the late 1970s under the original EIR and Snowcreek Master Plan. In 1981, Dempsey proposed an updated master plan. An EIR was performed on the proposed updated master plan. After the EIR was approved, the Dempsey Construction Corporation entered into a development agreement (DA) with Mono County in 1982. Mono County entered into the DA because the County found that the master plan would result in the creation of a physical environment that would “...conform to and complement the goals of the community, providing housing, recreational and passive open space, sites for schools and religious worship, create an environment sensitive to human needs and values, and would protect adjacent land uses from adverse impacts.”

In addition, the County found that the master plan would be “...in the best interests of the County and would provide for orderly growth and development of the area consistent with the County’s planning goals and objectives.”

The DA required public works improvements, utilities and facilities, and was valid for 20 years. When the Town of Mammoth Lakes incorporated in 1984, the Town accepted and adopted the DA (Resolution #84-50). The terms of the DA were not extended after 20 years, so the DA expired in 2002.

In 2005, a land exchange was completed between the USFS and Snowcreek Investment Co. (Linda Dempsey) in order to acquire enough land for a 9-hole addition to create an 18-hole golf course (Map #5). After the land exchange, Snowcreek Investment Co. entered into a covenant with the Town of Mammoth Lakes that protected the exchange parcel from residential housing, commercial lodging, transient occupancy, and being further subdivided. The covenant was initiated as a part of the exchange process, and is monitored by the Eastern Sierra Land Trust.

At the time of the master plan update, 1981, the Snowcreek village center was expected to provide commercial services and a ski base for the future Sherwin Ski Bowl Area. An EIR for the Sherwin Ski Area was approved in 1990, but the ski area's development has not been realized. Without the ski base component, the Snowcreek village area will need to develop with alternative recreation and other attractions to sustain the site.

In 2005, Mr. Chuck Lande, Chadmar Development, purchased much of the Snowcreek properties, not including the Snowcreek Athletic Club.

Current Planning Status

Snowcreek VII - Hilltop

Currently an application for the Hilltop/Snowcreek VII parcel has been submitted, and is going through the planning process. Staff has held weekly meetings with the development team over the last few months, and consolidated plan check comments have been provided to the applicant. The Planning Commission public hearing for this project is scheduled for April 19th 2006.

Snowcreek Master Plan

Town staff has had a few informal conversations with Chadmar about the future master plan for the remaining undeveloped areas. Staff anticipates the filing of the Master Plan application at any time.

Resort Design and Density

The Snowcreek Village Area is zoned Resort, which describes the design focus for development in the area. As a resort zone, this area's development should provide a unique resort experience, offering distinctive services and activities. The development should be planned with activities appropriate for the area, which may include hotels, recreational amenities, commercial space, transit facilities and interconnections to the community's and public trail systems. The

design of the area should assure a functional and distinctive pedestrian-scaled environment that will encourage visitors to return to Mammoth Lakes (Town of Mammoth Lakes 1987 General Plan, page 59-60). The original Snowcreek Master Plan achieved this resort vision with the Sherwin Ski Area access and the surrounding clustered mix of uses.

The density for the village area directly relates to its design. A design that provides community benefits, including TOT, would earn a higher density than a design providing little or no community benefit, due to the location of on-site amenities. Community benefits could include an events center, facilities for horseback riders, hikers, bikers, snowmobilers, XC skiers, backcountry skiers and snowboarders, etc.

According to Town staff calculations, the density range for the Snowcreek Village Area appears to be 863 – 1187 units (Table #1 and Calculations). The 863 units are assigned to the village area under the existing master plan. The 1187 units are the units assigned to the entire Snowcreek area under the existing master plan, subtracting the units/lots that have been built or are proposed in Snowcreek. The 863-1187 units would be a 14.9 – 20.5 units/acre density for the village area. According to this density range for the village area, the overall density for Snowcreek would be 5.85 – 6.76 units/acre.

Issues and Opportunities

Staff has also been working to identify the key issues and opportunities that may be presented through the Master Plan process. Much of this thinking has been developed through the Mobility and Physical Development plans. The key questions that we have framed are:

1. What are the program and design characteristics of the livable neighborhood, including affordable workforce housing, convenience retail, public amenities, and active/passive recreation facilities?
2. How should the area connect to the larger community and how does the community access the area and the public lands beyond?
3. How should Snowcreek contribute to the Town's overall economy, tourism and mix of recreation amenities?
4. What are the special attributes of the site and how should the site be designed?

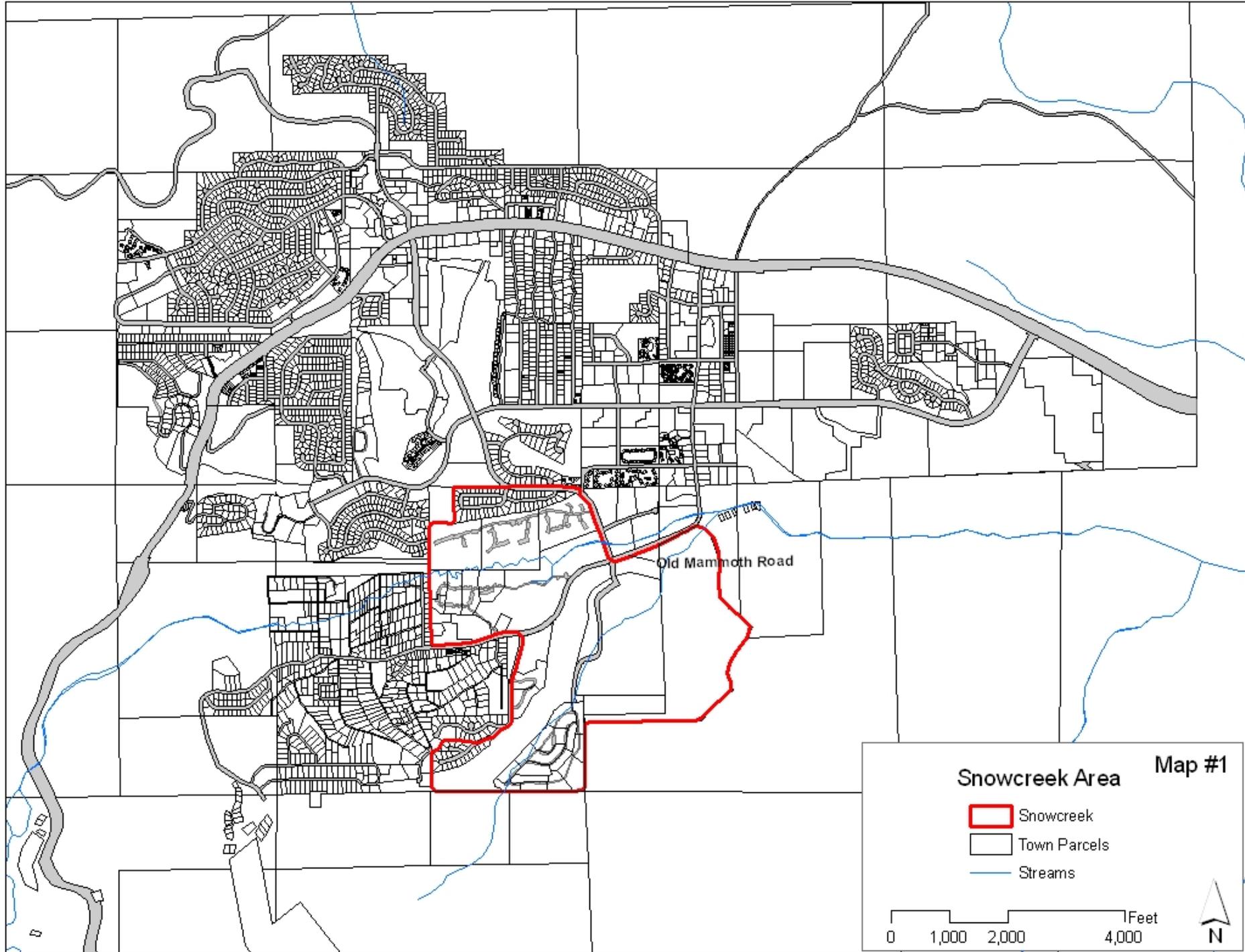
Some of the broad initial design and development ideas and observations that have been formed about the overall qualities of Snowcreek are:

1. Western range and meadow – open space, broad and wide with backdrop of Sherwin Mountains.

2. Traditional small-scale western town site – located at the edge of Old Mammoth [or situated well back], active day, night and through four seasons.
3. Dispersed structures, light on the land, with vertical emphasis and detailing rather than heavy or strong horizontality.
4. Significant color palette and contrast - sage green and weathered brown.
5. Landscape that reinforces sage and wet meadow.
6. New market type in Mammoth - the western ranch/Jackson Hole atmosphere and experience.
7. New summer and fall activities with polish – equestrian, sleigh- and hay-rides into town, golf and tennis.
8. Golf, tennis, clubhouse with food and beverage service.
9. In-town state-of-the-art Nordic Ski center facility.
10. Reinvestment in and improvement of the meadows equestrian center.
11. New activity anchor at Old Mammoth – create a special event “town commons” and an indoor four seasons field house.
12. Stewardship of land and resource protection - access to the Sherwin Mountains.

In the context of the Draft General Plan Update, staff expects to frame the achievement of community benefits through performance zoning. For example, Breckenridge, Colorado has a points system to evaluate projects. The Town of Breckenridge must approve a project when it has a score of zero points or above. Points are awarded for compliance with codes and deducted for nonconformance. Projects are also awarded points when the development addresses community needs and/or social services. So a project can go over density if the project provides substantial community benefits.

Staff will continue to develop these ideas and incorporate them in to the Mobility and Physical Development plans. This should be completed in June 2006.

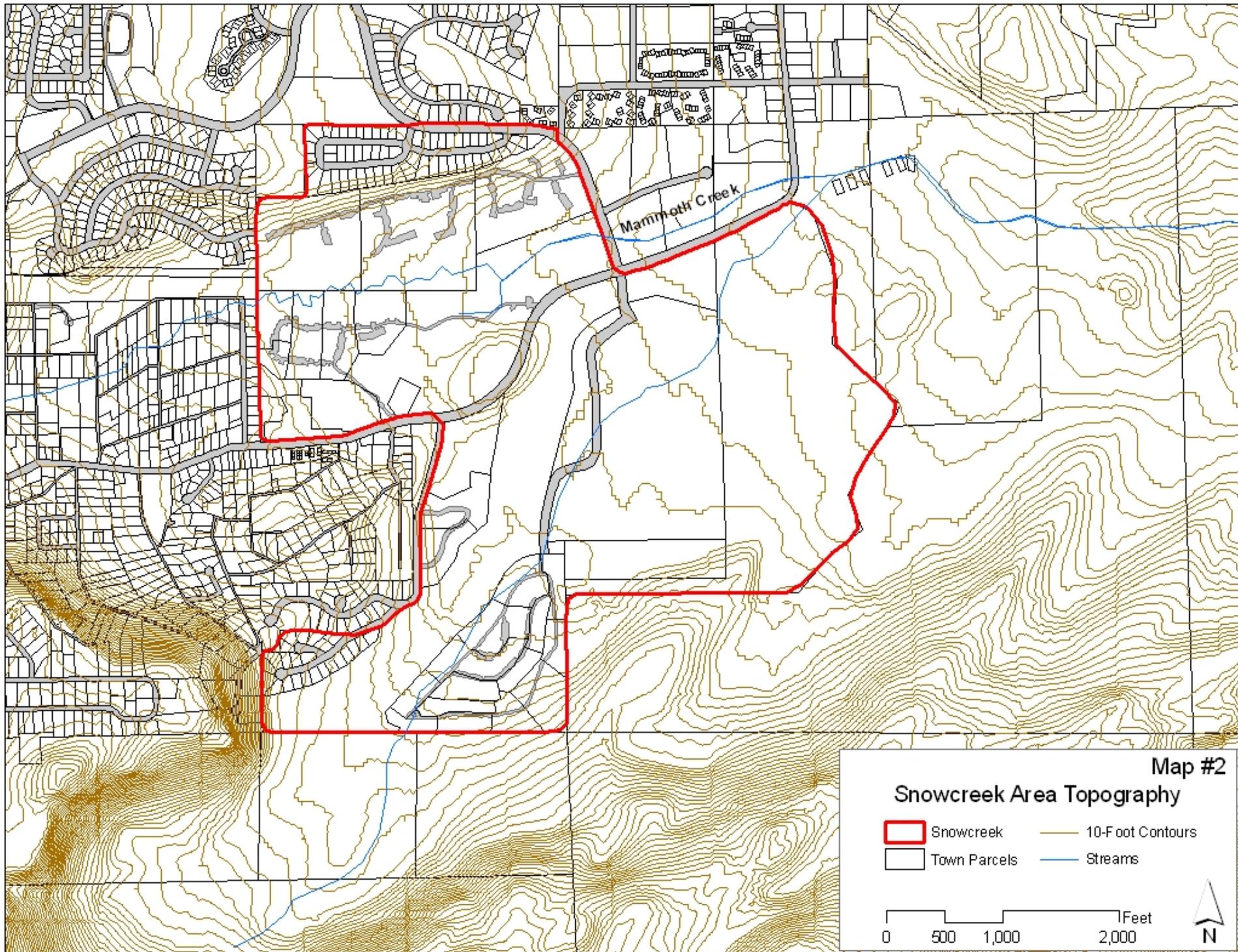


Snowcreek Area Map #1

-  Snowcreek
-  Town Parcels
-  Streams

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet





Map #2

Snowcreek Area Topography

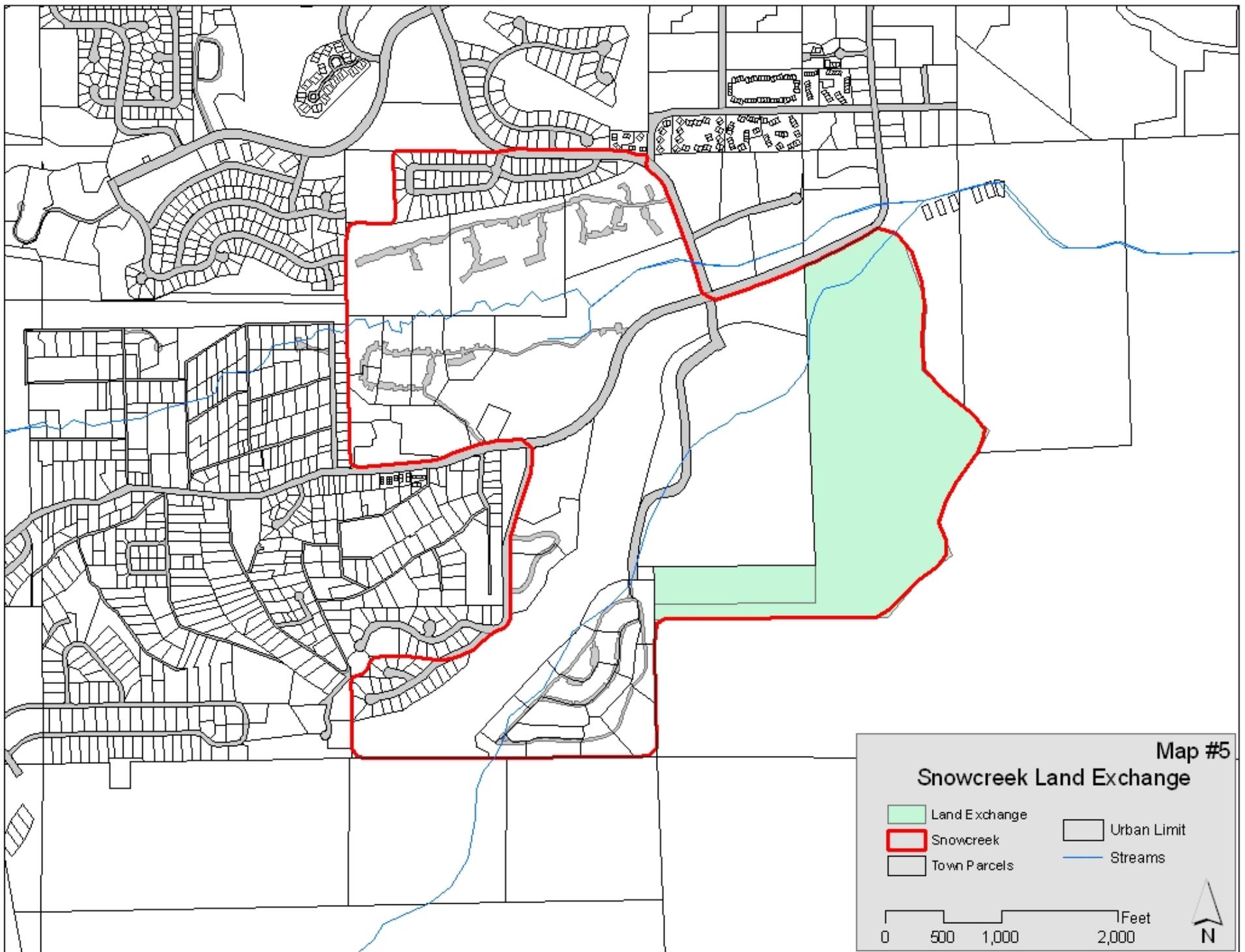
-  Snowcreek
-  Town Parcels
-  10-Foot Contours
-  Streams

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet









Map #5
Snowcreek Land Exchange

 Land Exchange	 Urban Limit
 Snowcreek	 Streams
 Town Parcels	

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

N

Table #1 and Calculations – Revised August 2007

Snowcreek Residential Area	Acres	Master Plan Unit Count	Actual Unit/Lot Count	Master Plan Unit Count - Actual Unit Count	Master Plan Density/Acre	Actual Density/Acre
Snowcreek I, II and III	28.86	318	316	2	11.02	10.95
Snowcreek IV	13.39	151	138	13	11.28	10.31
Snowcreek V	27.38	241	294	-53	8.80	10.74
Snowcreek VI	12.81	160	106	54	12.49	8.27
Snowcreek VII (under construction)	17.51	149	118	31	8.51	6.74
Snowcreek Crest	14.97	195	58 (lots)	137	8.51	3.87
The Ranch at Snowcreek	19.52	205	43 (lots)*	162	13.03	2.20
Aspen Village	7.03	50	72	-22	10.50	10.24
Totals	141.47	1469	1145	324	10.52	7.92

* The Actual Lot Count for the Ranch applies to the 19.52 acre area. The area was reduced from 19.52 to 12.9 acres.

Snowcreek Village Area	
Acres	57.89
Master Plan Density/Acre	14.9
Total Master Plan Unit Count	863
General Plan and Zoning Code allowable Density/Acre	6 to 8
General Plan and Zoning Code allowable Density/Acre	347-463

Snowcreek Master Plan Area	
Acres	345
Master Plan Density/Acre	6.76
Master Plan Unit Count	2332
Density Bonuses	36.625*
Total Snowcreek Unit Count	2368.625
General Plan and Zoning Code allowable Density/Acre	6 to 8
General Plan and Zoning Code allowable Density/Acre	2070-2760

* Density bonus attached to the Athletic Club site.

Calculations

2368.625 - 1145 = **1223.625** units under the master plan not currently proposed or built in the Snowcreek Master Plan Area. This number includes the density bonus because the Athletic Club site is located within the Snowcreek Master Plan.

863 + 324 = **1187** units designated under the master plan for the village area plus the unbuilt units from existing and currently proposed development. The density bonus is not included in this number because the bonus is attached to the Athletic Club site, which is not owned by the owner of the village area.

Conclusion

The density range for the Snowcreek Village Area appears to be 863 – 1187 units. The 863 units are assigned to the village area under the existing master plan. The 1187 units are the units assigned to the entire Snowcreek Master Plan area under the existing master plan, subtracting the units/lots that have been built or under construction and the density bonus. The 863-1187 units would be a 14.9 – 20.5 units/acre density for the village area. According to this density range for the village area, the overall density for Snowcreek would be 5.85 – 6.76 units/acre.