

Agenda Item _____
Date: July 22, 6-8 pm and
July 23, 2008 9am
File No. _____

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Subject: Business Matter____: Approval of Sierra Star District Plan Framework in Conjunction with the Application for the Sierra Star Master Plan.

Initiated by: Mark Wardlaw, Community Development Director
Sandra Moberly, Senior Planner

BACKGROUND:

On June 20, 2007, the Town Council adopted a resolution establishing policies for the processing of major land use development applications in relationship to the 2007 General Plan. On April 2, 2008, the Town Council amended this resolution to incorporate changes, including a revised district planning process (Attachment 1). This policy established modified definitions and procedures to prepare Neighborhood District Plans (NDPs) for major land use development permit applications, including approval by Planning Commission and Town Council of the "Framework," consisting of the NDP boundary, sphere of influence, element review/issue identification, and guiding principles.

The purpose of this agenda item is to:

- 1) Recommend approval to the Town Council of the Framework for the Sierra Star NDP at the regular Planning Commission meeting on July 23, 2008 at 9am. This will allow the Framework and a contract with Integrated Design Studio (IDS) to be forwarded to the Town Council for review and approval, and
- 2) Determine the extent of additional joint Commission workshop(s) that are necessary, if any, based on the complexity of the issues discussed at the July 22, 2008 joint Commission workshop.

The steps for this Framework stage of the Sierra Star NDP process are:

- 1) July 22nd 6-8pm: Planning Commission will hold a public input workshop with joint Commissions facilitated by a third party consultant, IDS. The purpose of this workshop is to gain general public input on issues, opportunities, constraints, form, function, character, and connection to town wide goals for the Sierra Star NDP. The results of this workshop will inform the Planning Commission's decisions on the Sierra Star NDP Framework and extent of additional joint Commission workshops needed at their July 23, 2008 meeting. No decisions will be made at this workshop.
- 2) July 23rd 9am: Regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. The Sierra Star NDP Framework will be a Business Item on the Planning Commission's July 23, 2008 agenda. At this meeting, the Planning Commission will conclude the Sierra Star NDP Framework discussion and will make a decision on the Sierra Star Framework, such as approve the Framework as proposed or with modifications. The Planning Commission will also determine the extent of additional joint Commission workshop(s) that are needed based on the complexity of issues, if any. If no additional workshop(s) are determined to be needed, then the master plan will be finalized and submitted to the Planning Commission for consideration. The Planning Commission's decisions will be informed by the July 22, 2008 joint Commission workshop.

The Sierra Star district planning effort will inform and complement the CEQA analysis and the project evaluation process for the Sierra Star Master Plan project application.

SIERRA STAR NDP FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:

This district planning effort has been initiated by a proposed project application for "Sierra Star Master Plan." The project site is currently designated as the "*Lodestar Master Plan*" area that was designated and approved by the Town in 1991. The current project would involve changes to the 1991 *Lodestar Master Plan* (LMP) that would result in replacement of the LMP with a new master plan that would change the project name (Sierra Star Master Plan), land area, and land uses set forth in the 1991 plan. The LMP set development standards for an approximately 226-acre site situated around the Sierra Star Golf Course.

In conjunction with this application, the Town requires a NDP for the Sierra Star District, as identified in the 2007 General Plan.

IDS has prepared a PowerPoint presentation that represents their initial work on the Sierra Star NDP, which is included as Attachment 3. This will be presented to the joint Commissions on July 22, 2008 at 6pm.

As stated in Town Council's NDP process, a NDP and a master plan/specific plan, like the Sierra Star Master Plan, will have a coterminous boundary. The Sierra Star Master Plan will be considered for adoption, meaning that the accepted results of the NDP process will be incorporated into the codified master plan. The NDP work effort will result in a study that will be bound separately from the master plan.

Neighborhood District Plan Boundary and Sphere of Influence

Planning Commission Action 1: Approve the Boundary and Sphere of Influence.

The recommended NDP boundary and sphere of influence are shown in Attachment 4. The applicant and staff considered the Town Council's adopted NDP Process, the boundaries of the proposed Sierra Star Master Plan, the "Neighborhood Character Map" in the 2007 General Plan, and the boundaries of the adjacent developments to determine a boundary for this NDP. Consistent with Town Council's NDP policy, the proposed NDP boundary is coterminous with the Sierra Star Master Plan project boundary.

The proposed "sphere of influence" for the Sierra Star NDP encompasses a more extensive area for consideration in relationship to the site. The sphere of influence includes regions in the vicinity that may have common issues or upon which the district may have impacts. It extends to the north side of Main Street, east to Mono Street within the Sierra Valley sites, south beyond the Bell Shaped Parcel, and west into the Majestic Pines area.

Eagle Lodge, the North Village area, and Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access (MLTPA) GIC points are outside of the sphere of influence but are also considered in this NDP.

Guiding Principles

Planning Commission Action 2: Confirm the General Plan District Character Description as the guiding principles for the Sierra Star Master Plan NDP.

The "guiding principles" identified in the Town Council's NDP process include the applicable Neighborhood and District Character description in the 2007 General Plan and any other guiding principle directions from

the Planning Commission and/or Town Council. The Neighborhood and District Character description for Sierra Star identifies a series of characteristics that should be reflected in any future development of the Sierra Star District. Below are the guiding principles for the Sierra Star NDP as shown in the 2007 General Plan:

Sierra Star characteristics:

1. *Full service four-season resort,*
2. *Landmark destination,*
3. *Special vistas to surrounding mountains,*
4. *Extensive open space and tree preservation,*
5. *Four-season recreation use; e.g. golf course and cross-country skiing, summer focus on open space and outdoor experiences,*
6. *Non-vehicular access options to the Eagle Lodge, North Village District, Main Street and Old Mammoth Road.*

Because these characteristics are the guiding principles for the Sierra Star NDP and the Sierra Star Master Plan, they are also incorporated into the scope of work for the Sierra Star NDP.

Element Review/Issues Identification

Planning Commission Action 3: Identify all elements and issues that need to be addressed through the Sierra Star NDP, possibly through options/alternatives.

The element review/issues identification for the Sierra Star NDP will include the items described in the Town Council's NDP process, specifically Exhibits 4 and 5 that include the Model District Plan Content and Organization, District Planning List of Topical Elements, and the 2007 General Plan Evaluation Template. The 2007 General Plan Evaluation Template for the Sierra Star NDP/ Sierra Star Master Plan project is included as Attachment 5 and will be a work in progress throughout the NDP process, CEQA analysis, and project evaluation. A detailed list of these elements and issues for the Sierra Star NDP is included in the scope of work (Attachment 2).

NDP Process and Community Participation

One of the important purposes of district planning is to ensure that the general public and key stakeholders of a district are involved throughout the process. This process should allow for early discussion of issues, opportunities, desires and ideas; discussion of the permit application and plan options; and discussion of the selected preferred plan option.

The Sierra Star NDP process will include community meetings at the following junctures:

- Joint Commission Workshop #1: Issues, Opportunities, Constraints, Form, Function, Character, and Connection to Town Wide Goals (July 22, 2008 6-8pm) (*number of workshops will be determined by Planning Commission based on the complexity of the issues*).
- Planning Commission review and approval of the Sierra Star NDP Framework (July 22-23, 2008).
- Town Council approval of the Sierra Star NDP Framework as a consent agenda item after Planning Commission has recommended approval of the Framework.
- Future workshops as determined.

In addition, a “Focus Group” has been convened, consisting of a small group of property owners and residents to identify detailed opportunities and constraints (Town Council policy Step 3.b.i.2.). This group includes representatives focused on specific issues, from both inside and outside the NDP and have selected by the Town and the applicant. The Focus Group includes representatives from surrounding residential neighborhoods and others. The first Focus Group meeting for the Sierra Star NDP is anticipated on July 22, 2008, prior to the joint Planning Commission meeting. Town staff will report the results of this Focus Group meeting to the joint Commission at the July 22, 2008 6pm workshop.

Town staff will develop a community outreach strategy to provide advance notification of future meetings and ensure a broad and inclusive public process.

Summary

The scope of work for the Sierra Star NDP, contained in Attachment 2, includes the Framework and process described in the Town Council’s NDP process. The applicant desires to use IDS as the planning consultant to prepare, plan and facilitate the Sierra Star NDP public process. The Town agrees with using IDS for this NDP and will use the attached scope of work/Framework, as approved by Planning

Commission and Town Council, to prepare a contract with IDS for the Sierra Star NDP.

OPTIONS ANALYSIS:

After conducting the joint Commission workshop on July 22, 2008, the Planning Commission will have two decisions before them at their regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2008 at 9am, as set forth below.

1. Sierra Star NDP Framework

Option a. Recommend approval to the Town Council of the Sierra Star Neighborhood District Plan Framework, consisting of the boundary, sphere of influence, element review/issues identification and guiding principles as proposed.

Option b. Recommend approval to the Town Council of the Sierra Star Neighborhood District Plan Framework, consisting of the boundary, sphere of influence, element review/issues identification and guiding principles as modified by the Planning Commission.

Option 1.a. and Option 1.b. will allow the Framework and a contract with IDS to be forwarded to the Town Council for review and approval.

2. Additional Joint Commission Workshops on Sierra Star NDP

Option a. Determine the extent of additional joint Commission workshop(s) that are required to address the complexity of the Sierra Star NDP issues, if any, prior to options being prepared.

Option b. Determine that no additional joint Commission workshops are required to address the complexity of the Sierra Star NDP issues, and direct Town staff to proceed with NDP Step 3.d., prepare written report and options to address identified issues.

Option 2.a. would allow for additional joint Commission workshop(s) and provide more opportunities for the public and Commissions to discuss Sierra Star NDP issues prior to the preparation of options.

Option 2.b. would not allow for additional joint Commission workshops to discuss issues; the next public meeting on the Sierra Star NDP would be the joint Commission options workshop.

VISION CONSIDERATIONS:

Successful implementation of District Planning will further emphasize the goals of the General Plan and provide an understanding of the contribution of each neighborhood and district toward the social, economic, and environmental success of the entire community.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The contract between the Town and IDS for the Sierra Star Neighborhood District Plan will be funded by the applicant for the Sierra Star Master Plan project.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Sierra Star Master Plan project is currently being reviewed through an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft EIR was published in late April, 2007 and was circulated to the public from April 26, 2007 until June 11, 2007.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission choose **Option 1a** or **Option 1b** and approve the Sierra Star Neighborhood District Plan Framework, consisting of the boundary, sphere of influence, element review/issues identification, and guiding principles, as proposed or as modified by the Planning Commission.

It is further recommended that the Planning Commission determine whether **Option 2a** or **Option 2b** is appropriate based on the results of the July 22, 2008 joint Commission workshop on the Sierra Star Neighborhood District Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Town Council Neighborhood District Planning Process (adopted April 2, 2008)
2. Framework/Scope of Work for the Sierra Star NDP
3. IDS PowerPoint presentation (to be presented to joint Commissions on July 22, 2008 at 6pm)
4. Proposed Neighborhood District Plan Boundary and Sphere of Influence
5. 2007 General Plan Evaluation Template for the Sierra Star NDP/Sierra Star Master Plan project