

**Municipal Service Review  
And  
Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

**Lee Vining Public Utility District  
Mono County, California**

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## SUMMARY

### Municipal Service Review Determinations

#### 1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

- The district needs to develop long-term planning documents that project current and future water demand within the district's boundaries and analyze the water and sewer systems in terms of supply, distribution capabilities, and treatment capabilities.
- The expansion and renovation of existing facilities may be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district, as well as to serve development at build-out. The district has no long-term plans.
- The replacement of existing equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment may be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has no long-term plans.

#### 2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for significant additional growth in Lee Vining Valley.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas.
- The population in Lee Vining is projected to increase to 269 by 2,020 and 290 by 2,030.

#### 3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

- The PUD's future financing will continue to rely heavily on use charges and property tax revenues.
- The adequacy of property tax revenues to fund local facilities and services has steadily declined over time. There is a need to ensure that property tax assessments are kept current.
- The district has no long-term planning documents that identify needed capital facilities and the costs associated with developing those facilities.
- The district should consider developing a longterm financial planning documents to ensure that it will have adequate funding sources both in the short-term and long-term.

#### 4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

- Mono Basin is a discrete geographic area within Mono County with distinct community areas—Lee Vining, Mono City, and Lundy Canyon.
- Lee Vining FPD and Mono City FPD are located approximately three miles apart.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has no comprehensive long-range plan to address the demands imposed by growth within the district.
- There are several small water service providers in the Mono Basin. They could potentially benefit from being combined into one entity, with separate facilities in various community areas
- The existing Sphere of Influence Report for the Lee Vining PUD notes that the PUD could ultimately serve as the primary service provider for the area. Such a consolidation should occur only with the concurrence of all affected entities.

### **5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring**

- All funding mechanisms have inherent limitations that may prevent their implementation, use or restructure.
- The district's revenues will continue to rely on use charges and property tax revenues.
- The district should continue to seek grant funding.

### **6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities and Resources**

- Due to geographic distances between communities in the county, sharing facilities among water and sewer providers is not possible.
- Lee Vining includes other special district service providers, as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be other opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the County. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs.

### **7. Government Structure Options**

- In regions of the county with separate, distinct communities that are geographically remote from each other, public services are most logically provided by single purpose special districts rather than by a larger entity such as the county.
- In regions of the county that have several small districts serving separate communities within the region, such as Mono Basin, an opportunity exists to merge the districts to create a regional district with facilities in each community.
- Creating a regional district in Mono Basin could reduce administrative costs, eliminate duplication of services, and create a more financially stable district and one that would enjoy greater economies of scale than the smaller districts. One district that was planning for future development in the Mono Basin would also create a more cohesive approach to the long-term provision of services in the region.

### **8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies**

- The PUD is managed by an elected Board of Directors.
- The district has no long-term planning documents that address how to maintain current service levels while providing for the needs of future development.

### **9. Local Accountability and Governance**

- The PUD complies with the minimum requirements for open meetings and public records.
- The district seeks to inform the community of district activities and services.

## **Sphere of Influence Findings**

### **1. Present and Planned Land Uses**

Land use within Lee Vining is a mix of commercial uses and single-family residential uses. The planned land uses for the area are also commercial and single-family residential uses. Development will occur within and adjacent to existing development.

### **2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services**

Lee Vining has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve existing and planned development in the area.

### **3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services**

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has needs to develop long-term planning documents to project future water and sewer demands and improvements needed to meet current and future projected demand.

### **4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest**

The district area exhibits social and economic interdependence with residents of Mono City and Lundy Canyon. These communities of interest are relevant to the determination of an appropriate governmental structure for service provision in the Mono Basin.

## **Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

The Sphere of Influence for the Lee Vining Public Utility District consists of the current district area along with the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center, the County Park, and an area adjacent to the district that is owned by Southern California Edison.

## **Reorganization Recommendation**

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature also finds that, whether governmental services are proposed to be provided by a single-purpose agency, several agencies, or a multipurpose agency, responsibility should be given to the agency or agencies that can best provide government services.

Currently, the Lee Vining PUD provides adequate services within its boundaries. As more development occurs within the area, a regional water and sewer provider might best provide services to the Mono Basin area. Small private and mutual water companies could ultimately transfer service responsibilities to a regional service provider. When reorganization is being considered, a reorganization study should be conducted to determine what governmental structure would best provide services for the region. Such a reorganization should occur only with the concurrence of the involved districts' Boards of Directors.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Municipal Service Reviews**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) to conduct comprehensive reviews of all municipal services in each county in California and to periodically update that information. The purpose of the municipal service reviews is to gather detailed information on public service capacities and issues.

### **Relationship Between Municipal Service Reviews and Spheres of Influence**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act requires LAFCOs to develop and determine the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each applicable local governmental agency that provides services or facilities related to development. Government Code Section 56076 defines a SOI as “a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency.” Service reviews must be completed prior to the establishment or update of SOIs (§56430(a)). Spheres of influence must be reviewed and updated as necessary, but not less than once every five years (§56425).

The information and determinations contained in a Municipal Service Review are intended to guide and inform SOI decisions. Service reviews enable LAFCO to determine SOI boundaries and to establish the most efficient service provider for areas needing new service. They also function as the basis for other government reorganizations. Section 56430, as noted above, states that LAFCO can conduct these reviews “before, in conjunction with, but no later than the time it is considering an action to establish a SOI.”

The Lee Vining Public Utility District Municipal Service Review is being conducted in response to, and in conjunction with, an update of the sphere of influence for the district.

## **II. LEE VINING PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

### **DISTRICT OVERVIEW**

#### **Service Area**

The Lee Vining Public Utility District (PUD) was established in 1947 to provide water and sewer service to the community of Lee Vining. The district boundaries include approximately 88 acres of land within the community of Lee Vining (see Figure 1). Lee Vining is located in the Mono Basin in the center of Mono County, approximately 15 miles south of Bridgeport and 15 miles north of June Lake.

Lee Vining is located at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains at the junction of US Highway 395 and State Route 120. The area is bordered to the west by the mountains and to the north and south by the Mono Basin and to the east by Mono Lake. The area contains private and public lands. Private lands are concentrated primarily in the community of Lee Vining and in small pockets adjacent to Highway 395. Surrounding public lands are managed by the Inyo National Forest under the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Management Plan or by the Bureau of Land Management.

Lee Vining is a popular recreation destination as well as a year-round residential community. The community includes commercial uses, schools, visitor centers for Mono Lake, community uses such as a fire department, community center, and ballfields, residential development, limited industrial uses, and a small airport. State Route 120 over Tioga Pass is heavily used in the summer as an entrance to Yosemite National Park. Lee Vining Creek runs past Lee Vining before entering Mono Lake. Vegetation in the area is primarily juniper-pine scrub, sagebrush-bitterbrush scrub, and lodgepole pine.

#### **Population Characteristics**

Mono County GIS estimates that there are 136 parcels in the district, including approximately 78 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). The district estimates that it serves approximately 180 households full-time. Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population within the district boundaries to be 212 in 2000 and 218 in 2003 (Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table 3, Mono County Housing Element).

In 2000, 9.4 percent of the population in Lee Vining was under 5 years old, 15 percent was 5-17 years old, 66 percent was 18 to 64, and 9.4 percent was over 65 (Census 2000 Summary File 1).

In 2000, there were 85 households in Lee Vining (Census 2000 Summary File 1). Fifty-two percent of the households were owner-occupied and 48 percent were rented (Census 2000 Summary File 1).





**Figure 1 Lee Vining Public Utility District Boundaries**

### **Services Provided**

The district provides water and sewer services to the Lee Vining townsite.

### **Other Services**

As a Public Utility District, the district is authorized to provide lighting, power, heat, transportation, telephone service, other methods of communication, garbage disposal, golf courses, fire protection, mosquito abatement, parks and recreation, building for public purposes, and drainage improvements.

### **Planned Land Uses**

The Mono County Land Use Element provides for additional development in Lee Vining. The additional development allowed by the plan would be a mix of commercial and single-family residential uses. Development would occur in existing community areas along Highway 395.

**District Planning**

The district has no planning documents.

**District Issues of Concern**

The district has not indicated any issues or concerns.

## **DISTRICT SERVICES**

### **Water Supply**

The district has water rights to two springs in Lee Vining Canyon, from which water is transported via a gravity flow 8-inch pipe to an 180,000-gallon storage tank. In addition, the district uses some of Southern California Edison's water rights through an informal agreement with SCE; in return, the district provides water service to SCE's facilities, which are located outside of the district's boundaries.

### **Water Storage**

The district has one 180,000-gallon storage tank. The district's storage capacity is adequate to meet domestic and fire flow needs.

### **Water Quality and Treatment**

The district's water is treated with chlorine at the storage tank and is tested regularly.

### **Water Distribution**

The district's water distribution system includes a 10-inch main line from the storage tank to the community and 6-inch lateral lines.

### **Water Use**

The district averages approximately 220,000 gallons per day of water use. Yearly water consumption is highest during the summer due to increased tourism and irrigation uses. The district serves 100 connections, and has 21 dry hydrants and four two-inch standing pipes. The district has adequate water pressure to meet fire flow needs; the district also has the ability to tap into the Los Angeles aqueduct for emergency purposes if necessary.

The district has no meters and no formal requirements for conservation. Large-scale users such as the schools are encouraged to water at night and to use timers. The capacity of the district's water source has not been quantified and the district has no long-term planning documents to identify future water demand.

### **Sewer Service**

The district provides sewage collection and treatment service to the same area served by the district's water system. The PUD has 100 sewer service connections. Sewage is collected through 6-inch lines and is transported by gravity flow to the district's treatment facility located on Los Angeles Department of Water and Power land north of the townsite. The district's treatment facility consists of a three tank septic system with five percolation ponds. The district estimates that approximately 50,000 gallons per day of sewage are treated on average. The district has adequate treatment capacity to meet existing and future service demands.

## **DISTRICT PERSONNEL**

The district has no employees. It contracts with the June Lake PUD for the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of district facilities. The district also periodically contracts with the Mammoth

Community Water District to clean out district sewer lines. District board members have historically played an active role in the day-to-day administrative and maintenance activities of the PUD.

### **DISTRICT FINANCES**

The district's main sources of revenue are service/use charges and property taxes. The district manager considers the fiscal health of the district to be fair. The district does not participate in any joint financing, cost sharing or purchasing. The district periodically applies for and receives grant funding.

**Table 1: Lee Vining Public Utility District Revenues and Expenses**

**For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2007**

<b>Operating Revenues</b>	
Charges for services	\$57,299
Assessments	<u>\$39,754</u>
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$97,053</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
Services and supplies	\$36,225
Insurance	\$4,510
Depreciation	\$12,530
Interest	<u>\$675</u>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$53,940</b>
<b>Net Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$43,113</b>
<b>Non-Operating Income</b>	
Interest Income	\$20,231
<b>Increase (decrease) in net assets</b>	<b>\$63,344</b>
<b>Net assets at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>\$589,667</b>
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>\$653,011</b>

### III. SERVICE REVIEW ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATIONS

Government Code §56430 requires the analysis of nine factors when assessing the capabilities of public service agencies. Each of the required factors is discussed below as it pertains to the Lee Vining Public Utility District.

#### 1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

##### Overview

*Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies of a district in terms of capacity, condition of facilities, service quality, and levels of service and its relationship to existing and planned service users.*

##### PUD

The district has no longterm planning documents. The district has not indicated whether or how it plans to meet future water and sewer demands in Lee Vining. To serve development at buildout, as well as to maintain or increase the quality of service provided to current customers, the district may need to expand or renovate existing facilities and replace or purchase additional equipment.

##### Determinations

- The district needs to develop long-term planning documents that project current and future water demand within the district's boundaries and analyze the water and sewer systems in terms of supply, distribution capabilities, and treatment capabilities.
- The expansion and renovation of existing facilities may be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district, as well as to serve development at build-out. The district has no long-term plans.
- The replacement of existing equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment may be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has no long-term plans.

#### 2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

##### Overview

*Purpose: To evaluate service needs based on existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.*

##### *Existing and Anticipated Growth Patterns in Lee Vining*

Lee Vining is a popular recreation destination as well as a year-round residential community. The community includes commercial uses, schools, visitor centers for Mono Lake, community uses such as a fire department, community center, and ballfields, residential development, limited industrial uses, and a small airport.

The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in Lee Vining:

**Table 2: Buildout Figures for Lee Vining**

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
SFR Single-Family Residential	5.8 du/acre	4	23
C Commercial	15 du/acre	28	420
I Industrial	---	18	---
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	37	---
SP Specific Plan	---	74	10 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total Private Lands</b>		161	453 <sup>b</sup>
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	4,062	---
OS Open Space – LADWP	1 du/80 acres	2,607	32
OS Open Space – SCE	1 du/80 acres	435	5
Other PF – USFS Mono Lake Visitor Center	---	72	---
<b>Total</b>		7,337	490

**Notes:** du = dwelling unit

- a. 74 acres = the Tioga Inn Specific Plan which permits 10 residential dwelling units. The remaining areas designated on the land use maps as SP are future potential expansion areas for Lee Vining that are now owned by LADWP.
- b. Also includes land leased from LADWP.

***Seasonal Population***

In addition to the projected residential growth, Lee Vining’s population experiences significant seasonal increases due to tourism. Lee Vining is a vacation destination for Mono Lake, Bodie State Historic Park, and Yosemite National Park.

***Population Projections***

Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population in Lee Vining to be 212 in 2000 and 218 in 2003. In 2000, there were 85 households in Lee Vining. The population in Lee Vining is projected to increase to 269 by 2020 and 290 by 2030 (State Department of Finance Report P-3, Population Projections).

**Determinations**

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for additional development in the area served by the Lee Vining Public Utility District.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas.
- The population in Lee Vining is projected to increase to 269 by 2,020 and 290 by 2,030.

### 3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

#### Overview

*Purpose:* To evaluate factors that affect the financing of needed improvements.

Expenses for special districts generally fall into one of three categories: (1) acquisition of facilities and major capital equipment, (2) employee expenses, and (3) ongoing operations and maintenance costs. The primary criteria that should be considered when evaluating adequacy of potential funding sources is availability, adequacy to meet the need, equity between existing and future residents, stability, and ability to cover on-going operating and maintenance costs.

#### PUD

The PUD is heavily dependent on use charges and property taxes for its revenue. These fees and charges are reviewed periodically to ensure that they are adequate. The district has no long-term financial planning documents to ensure that it will have adequate funding sources both in the short-term and long-term.

#### Determinations

- The PUD's future financing will continue to rely heavily on use charges and property tax revenues.
- The adequacy of property tax revenues to fund local facilities and services has steadily declined over time. There is a need to ensure that property tax assessments are kept current.
- The district has no long-term planning documents that identify needed capital facilities and the costs associated with developing those facilities.
- The district should consider developing a longterm financial planning documents to ensure that it will have adequate funding sources both in the short-term and long-term.

### 4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

#### Overview

*Purpose:* To identify practices or opportunities that may aid in eliminating unnecessary costs.

Cost avoidance opportunities are defined as actions to eliminate unnecessary costs derived from, but not limited to, duplication of service efforts, higher than necessary administration/operation cost ratios, use of outdated or deteriorating infrastructure and equipment, underutilized equipment or buildings or facilities, overlapping/inefficient service boundaries, inefficient purchasing or budgeting practices, and lack of economies of scale.

#### PUD

Generally, in Mono County each community area is a discrete geographic area and, as a result, there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries. The Mono Basin is its own discrete geographic area with distinct community areas in Mono City,



Lundy Canyon, and Lee Vining. Currently, there are no other special districts providing water in the Mono Basin but there are small mutual water companies.

Due to the small size of each of these entities, their resources, both physical and financial, are limited. The existing Sphere of Influence report for the Lee Vining PUD notes that the PUD could ultimately serve as the primary service provider for the area. The report goes on to say that such a consolidation should occur only with the concurrence of all affected entities.

### **Determinations**

- Mono Basin is a discrete geographic area within Mono County with distinct community areas—Lee Vining, Mono City, and Lundy Canyon.
- Lee Vining FPD and Mono City FPD are located approximately three miles apart.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has no comprehensive long-range plan to address the demands imposed by growth within the district.
- There are several small water service providers in the Mono Basin. They could potentially benefit from being combined into one entity, with separate facilities in various community areas
- The existing Sphere of Influence Report for the Lee Vining PUD notes that the PUD could ultimately serve as the primary service provider for the area. Such a consolidation should occur only with the concurrence of all affected entities.

## **5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring**

### **Overview**

*Purpose:* To identify opportunities to positively impact rates without decreasing service levels.

As noted in the Financing Constraints and Opportunities Section, the district's funding includes property taxes, connection fees, customer use/service charges, and grants. Each of these categories has inherent constraints that prevent an agency from restructuring them.

### ***PUD***

***Property Taxes*** – In California, the maximum property tax assessed on any land is generally 1% of the property's value.

### ***Customer Use/Service Charges*** –

The district charges each customer a flat monthly fee for water and sewer services. New customers are charged a new connection fee. The district periodically reviews and adjusts its water and sewer charges in order to insure that the district is collecting sufficient funds to cover its operating costs.

***Grants*** – Grant money is a one-time source that is useful in funding certain special projects but may be too unreliable or variable for ongoing expenses or recurring needs. The district has applied for and received grant funding in the past.

### **Determinations**

- All funding mechanisms have inherent limitations that may prevent their implementation, use or restructure.
- The district's revenues will continue to rely on use charges and property tax revenues.
- The district should continue to seek grant funding.

## 6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities

### Overview

*Purpose: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.*

Sharing facilities and resources can result in a more efficient and cost-effective delivery of resources.

### ***PUD --- Sharing Facilities with Other Water or Sewer Districts***

Due to the geographic distance between most communities in the county, sharing facilities among water and sewer districts is not possible.

### ***PUD --- Sharing Facilities with Other Entities within Lee Vining and the Mono Basin***

Currently, the district does not share any facilities. Lee Vining includes other special district service providers, as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the County. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs.

### Determinations

- Due to geographic distances between communities in the county, sharing facilities among water and sewer providers is not possible.
- Lee Vining includes other special district service providers, as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be other opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the County. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs.

## 7. Government Structure Options

### Overview

*Purpose: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide service.*

Government Code §56001 declares that it is the policy of the State to encourage orderly growth and development essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well being of the State. The Code further states that "this policy should be effected by the logical formation and modification of the boundaries of local agencies, with a preference granted to accommodating additional growth within, or through the expansion of, the boundaries of those local agencies which can best accommodate and provide necessary governmental services."

For local agency consolidations to occur there has to be significant (and popularly desired) cost savings or an increase in service.

### ***PUD***

Generally, in Mono County each community is a discrete geographic area and, as a result, there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries. Mono Basin is its own discrete geographic area with distinct community areas in Lee Vining, Mono City, and Lundy Canyon. Currently, Lee Vining and Mono City are served by several small water providers, with separate facilities, equipment and administration, located approximately three miles apart. Due to the small size of each of these entities, their resources, both physical and financial, are limited.

Communities in Mono County are unincorporated, except for the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Government for a variety of services is provided for those areas by Mono County. The county has several distinct regions, i.e. Antelope Valley, Bridgeport Valley, Mono Basin, June Lake, Long Valley, Wheeler Crest/Paradise, and the Tri-Valley. Due to the geographical distance between these regions, and between some of the communities within certain regions, there needs to be separate services in each community area. Local governance of those services is generally desired by residents in each region and is generally the most sensible approach since funding generated within a region is then spent in that region. However, some regions of the county, such as Mono Basin, have several small service providers serving separate communities within the region. It would be possible to merge those districts into a regional service provider with facilities in each community. Creating a regional service provider in Mono Basin could reduce administrative costs, eliminate duplication of services, and create a more financially stable district and one that would enjoy greater economies of scale than the smaller districts. One district that was planning for future development in Mono Basin would also create a more cohesive approach to the long-term provision of services in the region.

### **Determinations**

- In regions of the county with separate, distinct communities that are geographically remote from each other, public services are most logically provided by single purpose special districts rather than by a larger entity such as the county.
- In regions of the county that have several small districts serving separate communities within the region, such as Mono Basin, an opportunity exists to merge the districts to create a regional district with facilities in each community.
- Creating a regional district in Mono Basin could reduce administrative costs, eliminate duplication of services, and create a more financially stable district and one that would enjoy greater economies of scale than the smaller districts. One district that was planning for future development in the Mono Basin would also create a more cohesive approach to the long-term provision of services in the region.

## **8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies**

### **Overview**

*Purpose: To evaluate the quality of public services in comparison to cost.*

As defined by OPR, the term “management efficiency,” refers to the organized provision of the highest quality public services with the lowest necessary expenditure of public funds. An efficiently managed entity (1) promotes and demonstrates implementation of continuous improvement plans and strategies for budgeting, managing costs, training and utilizing personnel and customer service and involvement, (2) has the ability to provide service over the short and long term, (3) has the resources (fiscal, manpower, equipment, adopted service or work plans) to provide adequate service, (4) meets or exceeds environmental and industry service standards, as feasible considering local conditions or circumstances, (5) and maintains adequate contingency reserves. “Management Efficiency” is generally seen as organizational efficiency including the potential for consolidation.

The purpose of management is to effectively carry out the principal function and purpose of an agency. Good management will ensure that the agency’s mission is accomplished and that the agency’s efforts are sustainable into the future. Unfortunately, “good management” is a relatively subjective issue, and one that is hard to quantify.

#### ***PUD***

The PUD is managed by an elected Board of Directors. The district has no long-term planning documents

#### **Determinations**

- The PUD is managed by an elected Board of Directors.
- The district has no long-term planning documents that address how to maintain current service levels while providing for the needs of future development.

## **9. Local Accountability and Governance**

#### **Overview**

*Purpose: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with an agency’s decision-making and management processes.*

Special districts are required to adopt budgets at open public meetings and to file their budgets with the county auditor. They are required to have annual or biennial independent audits. Districts are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act for meetings, agendas and minutes. They are also subject to the Public Records Act.

Complying with the minimum open meeting and information requirements is not sufficient to allow an adequate amount of visibility and accountability. Outreach efforts, including convenient meeting times, additional notice of meetings and dissemination of district information, are desirable.

#### ***PUD***

The PUD complies with the minimum open meetings and public information requirements. The district is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors that meets monthly. Meeting notices and agendas are posted at the post office, and at the local market.

The district disseminates information to its customers through an annual report.

**Determinations**

- The PUD complies with the minimum requirements for open meetings and public records.
- The district seeks to inform the community of district activities and services.

## IV. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE RECOMMENDATION

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425 requires the Local Agency Formation Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of its determination with respect to four required findings. Each of the required findings is discussed below as it pertains to the Lee Vining Public Utility District.

### 1. Present and Planned Land Uses

**Discussion:**

Lee Vining is a popular recreation destination as well as a year-round residential community. The community includes commercial uses, schools, visitor centers for Mono Lake, community uses such as a fire department, community center, and ballfields, residential development, limited industrial uses, and a small airport. State Route 120 over Tioga Pass is heavily used in the summer as an entrance to Yosemite National Park. Lee Vining Creek runs past Lee Vining before entering Mono Lake. Vegetation in the area is primarily juniper-pine scrub, sagebrush-bitterbrush scrub, and lodgepole pine.

Mono County GIS estimates that there are 136 parcels in the district, including approximately 78 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population within the district boundaries to be 212 in 2000 and 218 in 2003 (Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table 3, Mono County Housing Element). In 2000, there were 85 households in Lee Vining (Census 2000 Summary File 1). The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in Lee Vining:

**Table 2: Buildout Figures for Lee Vining**

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
SFR Single-Family Residential	5.8 du/acre	4	23
C Commercial	15 du/acre	28	420
I Industrial	---	18	---
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	37	---
SP Specific Plan	---	74	10 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total Private Lands</b>		161	453 <sup>b</sup>
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	4,062	---
OS Open Space – LADWP	1 du/80 acres	2,607	32
OS Open Space – SCE	1 du/80 acres	435	5
Other PF – USFS Mono Lake Visitor Center	---	72	---
<b>Total</b>		7,337	490

**Notes:** du = dwelling unit

- a. 74 acres = the Tioga Inn Specific Plan which permits 10 residential dwelling units. The remaining areas designated on the land use maps as SP are future potential expansion areas for Lee Vining that are now owned by LADWP.
- b. Also includes land leased from LADWP.

***Finding:***

Land use within Lee Vining is a mix of commercial uses and single-family residential uses. The planned land uses for the area are also commercial and single-family residential uses. Development will occur within and adjacent to existing development.

## **2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services**

***Discussion:***

Development in Lee Vining is limited by the amount of undeveloped private land in the area. However, as tourism has increased at Mono Lake and en route to Yosemite, visitor demand for emergency medical services has increased. Resident and visitor demand will continue to create a need for water and sewer services. The buildout allowed by the General Plan will create a greater demand for those services in the future.

***Finding:***

Lee Vining has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve residents and visitors in the area.

## **3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services**

***Discussion:***

The district provides an adequate level of water and sewer services to its customers. The district has no long-term planning documents and has only minimally identified needed improvements to meet present demands.

The district has a number of latent powers that would allow it to provide additional services within Lee Vining, i.e. lighting, power, heat, transportation, telephone service, other methods of communication, mosquito abatement, garbage disposal, golf courses, fire protection, parks and recreation, building for public purposes, and drainage improvements.

***Finding:***

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has needs to develop long-term planning documents to project future water and sewer demands and improvements needed to meet current and future projected demand.

#### 4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest

***Discussion:***

Residents of Lee Vining, Mono City, and Lundy Canyon share social and economic communities of interest. Communities in the Mono Basin are isolated from other communities in the county; interaction with other communities in the county is limited due to the geographic distance between communities. Residents of Lee Vining, Mono City, and Lundy Canyon share school facilities, shopping, and public facilities located in the Mono Basin.

***Finding:***

The district area exhibits social and economic interdependence with residents of Mono City and Lundy Canyon. These communities of interest are relevant to the determination of an appropriate governmental structure for service provision in the Mono Basin.

#### **Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

The Sphere of Influence for the Lee Vining Public Utility District consists of the current district area along with the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center, the County Park, and an area adjacent to the district that is owned by Southern California Edison.

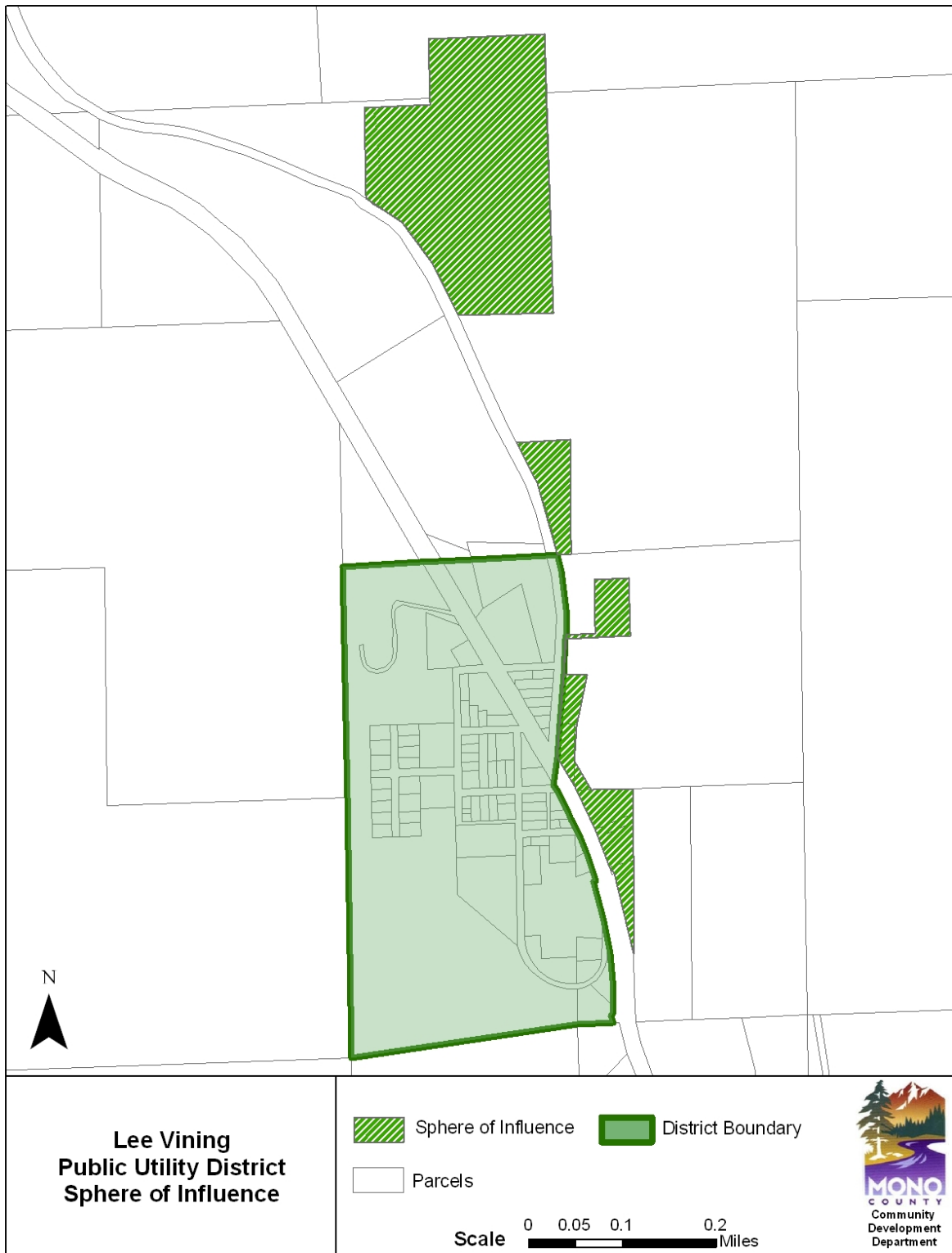
#### **Reorganization Recommendation**

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature also finds that, whether governmental services are proposed to be provided by a single-purpose agency, several agencies, or a multipurpose agency, responsibility should be given to the agency or agencies that can best provide government services.

Currently, the Lee Vining PUD provides adequate services within its boundaries. As more development occurs within the area, a regional water and sewer provider might best provide services to the Mono Basin area. Small private and mutual water companies could ultimately transfer service responsibilities to a regional service provider. When reorganization is being considered, a reorganization study should be conducted to determine what governmental structure would best provide services for the region. Such a reorganization should occur only with the concurrence of the involved districts' Boards of Directors.





**Figure 2 Lee Vining Public Utility District Sphere of Influence**

## V. REFERENCES

### References Consulted

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### Persons Consulted

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Lee Vining Public Utility District