

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 16, 2015

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3F

STAFF: Roger Moellendorf, Parks & Recreation Director

REQUEST: Discussion only regarding a process to select a project(s) for submission to the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act's Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas grant program.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Revenue from BLM land sales are picking up which means funding for Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) grant programs is also increasing. SNPLMA funds outdoor recreation projects including parks and trails through its Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas (PTNA) program. This is one of seven grant programs that SNPLMA manages. PTNA is the program that we have used as a funding source for projects such as the Eagle Valley Creek Bridge Crossing project. This year there is approximately \$30 million dollars available for all SNPLMA categories with approximately \$4.5 million of that amount earmarked for the PTNA. The next round (Round 16) may have \$50 million dollars available with maybe up to seven million dollars available for PTNA projects. The grant application for Round 16 will be due in the fall of 2016 and funding would be available in 2017.

PTNA's highest priorities are projects that meet the following criteria:

1. Serve communities or identified populations within communities that have been traditionally underserved.
2. Promote connectivity that links people to nature and to recreational opportunities, and unites places across the landscape.
3. Protects the integrity of community resources including natural, cultural, historical, educational, environmental, and open spaces.
4. Minimizes future maintenance and replacement costs and shows a high degree of sustainability.

Projects that are typically most successful at obtaining funding are projects that include physical, cultural, and educational connectivity from an urban area to natural landscapes. Thus trail projects usually receive high ratings. Traditional park projects such as neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and sports fields are a low priority unless they can meet the three criteria listed above. PTNA does not fund recreational structures other than minor structures such as picnic shelters and restrooms that are part of a larger project.

Staff feels that Carson City needs to be prepared to submit a least one competitive grant for Round 16. In an effort to do so, staff wants to work closely with the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) to nominate and evaluate potential projects. Evaluation of the projects will employ the same rating/ranking criteria that the SNPLMA program uses. To this end staff will provide the Commission in the coming meetings with information regarding the requirements of the PTNA program, provide PTNA value statements, goals and objectives, and samples of successful projects. Staff will provide suggested projects and receive suggested projects from both the Commission and OSAC. Collaboratively we will run the projects through the rating system in order to determine the strongest possible project or projects to submit for PTNA grant funding.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This agenda item is for informational purposes only. No formal action can be taken at this time.