

**City of Carson City
Agenda Report**

Date Submitted: February 10, 2015

Agenda Date Requested: February 19, 2015

Time Requested: 15 minutes

To: Mayor and Board of Supervisors

From: Parks and Recreation Department – Open Space Division

Subject Title: For Possible Action: To accept the recommendation of the Open Space Advisory Committee to approve the work program outline calling for the administration of the Open Space portion of the Quality of Life fund for management activities, capital improvement projects, planning activities, and land acquisitions for calendar year 2015. (Ann Bollinger, Roger Moellendorf, and Bruce Scott)

Staff Summary: As identified in Carson City Municipal Code 13.06 and in anticipation of the budget process, the attached report contains information regarding various activities conducted by the Open Space Program. The work program outline is used to develop the budget and present an opportunity to provide direction by the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Board of Supervisors. The work program outline is fairly lengthy and comprehensive. Currently, projects with grant funding, timelines, and deadlines are considered a high priority.

Type of Action Requested: (check one)

☐ Resolution

☐ Ordinance

☒ Formal Action/Motion

☐ Other (Specify)

Does This Action Require A Business Impact Statement: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Recommended Board Action: I move to accept the recommendation of the Open Space Advisory Committee to approve the work program outline calling for the administration of the Open Space portion of the Quality of Life fund for management activities, capital improvement projects, planning activities, and land acquisitions for calendar year 2015.

Explanation for Recommended Board Action: Staff uses this opportunity to discuss with the Board of Supervisors the Open Space Advisory Committee's projects and activities that are to be given priority in 2015.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation:
Carson City Municipal Code 13.06 – Open Space

Fiscal Impact: Project dependent.

Explanation of Impact: The activities to be carried out will be based on the adopted and future Quality of Life – Open Space budget as approved by the Board of Supervisors. Contractual expenditures over \$50,000 must be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Funding Source:

- 1) Quality of Life – Open Space is the primary funding source
- 2) Grants provide additional funding for project planning and/or project implementation

Alternatives:

- Not to adopt a work program outline
- Instruct staff to amend the work program outline

Supporting Material:

- December 15, 2014, staff report to Open Space Advisory Committee regarding the work program outline and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors
- Map of the West Side Open Space Opportunities

Prepared By: Ann Bollinger, Open Space Administrator

Reviewed By:

(Department Head)

Date:

Wichole Mariano

Date:

2/10/15

(City Manager)

[Signature]

Date:

2/10/15

(District Attorney)

[Signature]

Date:

2/10/15

(Finance Director)

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____ 1: _____ Aye/Nay

2: _____

(Vote Recorded By)

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: December 15, 2014

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3F

STAFF: Roger Moellendorf, Director
Ann Bollinger, Open Space Administrator

REQUEST: **Discussion and Possible Action:** To recommend to the Board of Supervisors a work program outline for the year 2015.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

The information below summarizes and organizes projects and other tasks being conducted in order to carry out the functions and responsibilities of the Open Space Program, as outlined by the provision of Chapter 13.06 of the Carson City Municipal Code. The information is organized into four main categories:

1. Management activities
2. Capital improvement projects
3. Planning activities
4. Land transaction activities

This work program outline will be used by staff as a reference in preparation of the budget and to provide an opportunity for the committee and the Board of Supervisors to discuss and request information and provide direction on the wide range of projects staff may work on in the future.

The Committee should also note the work program outline is fairly lengthy and comprehensive. With new staff (and new roles), some items may be considered a lower priority. Currently, projects with grant funding, timelines, and deadlines are considered a high priority.

Attached to this report is the list of properties acquired through the Open Space Program and a map of the West Side Open Space Opportunities.

1. MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Staff	New Natural Resource Specialist: In early 2015, it is anticipated that a new Natural Resource Specialist will begin work with the Open Space Program. There will be a fair amount of time dedicated by the Open Space Administrator for training.
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Staff (continued)	<p>Open Space / Park Ranger: The Draft Management Plan for the Carson River Area identifies the need for a dedicated open space / park ranger, who would patrol all of the open space properties. Staff will return to the Committee for more discussion on this item.</p> <p>Carson City Weed Coalition and Weed Coordinator: The Weed Coordinator position was previously accommodated through the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE). UNCE provided office space, supervision, and supplemental funding (in addition to the \$15,000 from the Carson Water Subconservancy District for weed control efforts). Unfortunately, UNCE funding was recently eliminated. Several Carson City departments and divisions are members of the Weed Coalition and have discussed various options to accommodate the position. At the present time, there is consensus that the Open Space Program will provide office space and supervision. The supplemental funding will be shared among the departments and divisions.</p>
Ash Canyon Road	Continue maintenance of the road from the water tanks to the west and utilize best management practices to alleviate erosion. NDEP Nonpoint Pollution grants will assist with funding.
Education (Schools)	Continue partnerships and participation on environmental education activities with River Wranglers, Carson High School, Silver State Charter School, Sierra Nevada College, and the University of Nevada – Reno.
Fuels Reduction Projects	Continue fuels reduction projects on the west side with grant funding from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA). The grant deadline is March 31, 2015. The projects include sheep grazing on annual grasses, hand and mechanical treatments, chemical application, and reseeding efforts. Staff will collaborate with the Fire Department's efforts to manage fuels at the wildland-urban interface around town. The City has executed a cooperative agreement with NDF for fire suppression assistance and land rehabilitation.
Volunteer Opportunities / Activities	<p>There are three broad categories of volunteers with the Open Space Program: individuals, organizations, and community groups.</p> <p>Currently, there are three active individuals (two who primarily patrol the west side and one who primarily assists in the Prison Hill Recreation Area with trash clean-up and trail repair), one official agreement with an organization (Muscle-Powered who assists with trail planning, construction, and trail maintenance), and several activities with community groups (Kiwanis, Scouts, etc.). When opportunities are available, the Great Basin Institute conducts field training on trail construction techniques in Carson City.</p>

<p>Volunteer Opportunities / Activities</p> <p>(continued)</p>	<p>In 2015, staff anticipates a follow-up with two individuals who have inquired about volunteer opportunities, official agreements with The Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch and the Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association (and/or Sierra Stompers Jeep Club), and continued partnerships with other community groups.</p> <p>Additionally, Carson City has completed two resources for volunteer/intern programs (a manual and best practices guide). One new requirement is the development and written submittal of job duties and skills.</p>
Weed Control	Continue collaboration with the Carson City Weed Coalition, City staff, and private contractor(s) towards the implementation of necessary treatments.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Eagle Valley Creek Crossing and Trail Extension	Construction is anticipated in 2015. The project is funded by a SNPLMA-Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas Grant for \$252,700.
Stone Shed at the Old Buzzy's Ranch Property	Staff researched the options and costs for roof repair and rehabilitation. Due to the rodent activity and associated health risks, a site clean-up would be required prior to any further planning and designs efforts. One quote estimated the minimum cost of \$17,000 plus project and construction management time. Demolition performed by the Public Works Department is estimated at \$2,000. Staff will return to the Committee for more discussion on this item.
V&T Trail, North of Combs Canyon Road	<p>The project is in progress. Along the State Lands segment, the next action is to submit a letter and documentation regarding concerns associated with the historic railroad grade. Staff anticipates a executed trail easement soon after. In addition, the Open Space Program must obtain easements from private owners along the route. Staff has received an agreement from NDOT to extend a single track, non-motorized trail to the Lakeview Subdivision. The Eagle Valley Children Home anticipates honoring Art Hannifin on a portion of the trail. A trail loop is also being considered within the Cancer Treatment Center lands.</p> <p>The actual trail improvements will be minimal, keeping a native and/or gravel surface.</p>
Waterfall Trail	The upper trail loop is completed; however, it will need some re-finishing.

3. PLANNING ACTIVITIES / REPORTS

Annual Reports to the Board of Supervisors	To be completed upon OSAC review and approval.
Charges and Fees	Adopt a fee schedule for activities and events, particularly for Silver Saddle Ranch. The Draft Management Plan for the Carson River Area suggests that “current fees implemented by BLM will remain in effect for one year following the land transfer.”
Conservation Easement Monitoring	Conduct annual monitoring and reporting for Horsecreek Ranch. Conduct self-monitoring on the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area, Prison Hill, and Silver Saddle Ranch for assurance and compliance with the BLM Conservation Easement.
Education and Information	Continue official naming of open space properties, develop maps and information.
Federal Agency Plans and Project Reviews	BLM Resource Management Plan: Staff has participated as a cooperating agency on the update of the BLM Resource Management Plan and will work various Committees and the Board of Supervisors to provide comments by the deadline of March 27, 2015.
Land Exchange with BLM	Continue communication with the BLM regarding the lands exchange. Staff has not yet heard a timeline for exchange; however, staff would like to start the conversation with the OSAC regarding a celebration.
Management Plan for the Carson River Area	Complete the revisions by summer 2015 and start identifying project priorities.
Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project	<p>The Tahoe Transportation District received a \$12 million grant from the Federal Lands Access Program towards improvements along State Route 28. In addition to existing funds, the grant will fund construction of a three-mile section of pathway from Incline Village to Sand Harbor (also known as the North Demonstration Project) and improvements to eight parking areas.</p> <p>The project construction will begin summer of 2015 for the Washoe County segment. The design of the parking lots will also begin in 2015, and construction of the parking lots is anticipated in 2017-2018.</p> <p>In Carson City’s political jurisdiction, the segment from Sand Harbor State Park to Spooner Summit is under consideration by the Incline Village General Improvement District and coordination with their new effluent pipeline project. Staff will continue to attend stakeholder meetings.</p>

Ordinances	Identify rules and regulations appropriate on open space properties, and develop ordinances for awareness and enforcement.
Programmatic Agreement for Cultural Resources	<p>A Programmatic Agreement has been executed among Carson City, the BLM and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the protection of cultural resources on all BLM properties being exchanged to Carson City per the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act and the Bently acquisition. The SHPO would like to meet and discuss implementation of the agreement.</p> <p>Additionally, the SHPO has a program to train volunteers for the stewardship of cultural resources, which would be beneficial to the Open Space Program and particularly for Silver Saddle Ranch.</p>
Signage	<p>As identified in the Draft Management Plan for the Carson River Area, but relevant for all open space properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sign standards. The standards should include size, color, font, city, and/or department logo, etc. • Consider developing a sign plan prior to installing signs. The plan would include objectives, sign locations, content, layout, cost estimate, and a maintenance plan. • Install monument / entrance signs at each named property.
Silver Saddle Ranch	Assess and evaluate the structures, including the water and electric system, for compliance with the Carson City Code and for public use.
Trails	Continue working with Muscle-Powered on future routes and linkages to the Tahoe Rim Trail and to Douglas County.
Vehicle Access and/or Recreation	Based on the Unified Pathways Master Plan (UPMP), identify roads / trails on city lands where off-road is permitted. Work with the federal agencies towards improved signage and information for the public. Provide for signage, fencing, and improvements to the Prison Hill motorized use area. After the BLM transfers are completed, identify and improve parking areas at the north end of Prison Hill and East Silver Saddle Ranch. Rehabilitation of areas as feasible.
Wetlands Enhancements at the Old Buzzy's Ranch Property	Ducks Unlimited was awarded a grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act for several projects throughout the Carson River watershed, including wetlands enhancements at the old Buzzy's Ranch property. In 2015, staff anticipates planning efforts towards the wetlands enhancements.

4. LAND TRANSACTIONS

Benna-Marshall (Upper Ash Canyon)	The Nevada Land Trust has been awarded a grant for acquisition of the Benna-Marshall property consisting of 45.5 acres in the Carson Range. The property is adjacent to the Open Space / Forest Legacy Acquisition and the Lake Tahoe Backcountry / Nevada State Park. At the present time, Nevada Land Trust is working with Nevada State Parks to become the eventual land owner.
Clear Creek / Nevada State Lands	The Clear Creek Trail has been an ongoing collaborative trail project with many different public, private, corporate and non-profit partners since 2008. Currently, 8.5 miles of the Clear Creek Trail are complete, ending at the west property line of Nevada State Lands. In an effort to acquire an easement or land for the trail and trailhead, Carson City, per the desire by Nevada State Lands to maximize the value of their property, requested a Master Plan and Zoning Map Amendment. On December 4, 2014, the Board of Supervisors denied the request. Staff wishes to continue collaboration towards this regional trail.
Collard Conservation Easement (Kings Canyon Road)	On hold by proponents due to depressed economy.
Freeway Multi-Use Path	Similar to the recent property acquisition from the Arraiz Family, staff wishes to acquire small, select areas of land for the south extension of the Freeway Multi-Use Path.
Schulz Investments	These parcels, located along U.S. Highway 50 west and near the Hutchinson acquisition and Horsecreek Ranch, have been identified on the open space opportunities map, but there have not been active discussions. In November 2014, the land owner called staff to inquire about interest and possible sale to the Open Space Program. The item is identified here for further discussion.
Lompa Lane Wetlands / Steinheimer Wetlands	The Lompa Lane wetlands / Steinheimer wetlands consists of 31 acres and is under the present ownership of Dwight Millard and Jim Bawden. Staff will develop agreements to facilitate the donation. Staff did not work on this item during 2014. Due to more urgent priorities, work on this item may be postponed.
Water / Water Rights	When agricultural lands were purchased, particularly the old Buzzy's Ranch property, the Committee and the Board of Supervisors emphasized the desire to keep the pastures green. Currently, there is not a proposal. Rather, the item is identified here for further discussion.

The Old Woods Ranch LLC	This parcel is located just south of the Horsecreek Ranch Conservation Easement and includes the southern part of the irrigated pasture. The parcel was evaluated in 2007-2008 and an application was submitted to the FY 2010 Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program for acquisition of a conservation easement on 130 acres. The NRCS grant funding was not approved. In late 2014, one of the land owners called staff to inquire about interest and possible sale to the Open Space Program. The item is identified here for further discussion.
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RECOMMENDED ACTION: I move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors a work program outline for the year 2015.

