



MEETING SUMMARY

October 20, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

Colorado River Conference Rooms, Southern Nevada Water Authority
100 City Parkway, 7th Floor, Las Vegas, Nevada

NTRAC members present:	David Strickland	Tena Cameron
	Larry Fossan	Scott Black
	Brian Walsh	Mauricia Baca
	Stephanie Bressler	Dale Hahn

NTRAC members absent: Tom Burns

Staff present:	Colby Pellegrino	Zane Marshall
	Mitch Bishop	JC Davis
	Tabitha Simmons	

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members from the public wishing to speak; however, Colby Pellegrino, Deputy General Manager of Resources, acknowledged written comment received from David Gray, which were provided to the committee members and are included herein.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Southern Nevada Water Authority's (Authority) Nonfunctional Turf Removal Advisory Committee (NTRAC) met on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The meeting began at 1:05 p.m.

#1 Approve agenda and minutes from the September 22, 2021 meeting.

Scott Black moved to approve the meeting agenda and the minutes from the September 22, 2021 meeting. The motion passed.

#2 Discuss defining functional and nonfunctional turf at non-single family residential properties, including potential waiver eligibility and criteria.

Ms. Pellegrino provided a review of the committee's draft definition of nonfunctional turf, which includes streetscape turf; frontage courtyard, interior and building adjacent turf; and certain HOA-managed landscape areas.

She also discussed the working definition of functional turf, which has been revised based on the committee's input to mean: *an irrigated lawn grass area that provides a recreational benefit to the community and is:*

- (a) Located at least 10 feet from a street (except as otherwise specified), installed on slopes less than 25%, and not installed within street medians, along streetscapes or at the front of entryways to parks, commercial sites, neighborhoods or subdivisions; and*

(b) Active/Programmed Recreation Turf, Athletic Field Turf, Designated Use Area Turf, Golf Course Play Turf, Pet Relief Turf, Playground Turf or Resident Area Turf, as these items are further defined and qualified.

Ms. Pellegrino then provided the definitions for the various types of functional turf, based on committee feedback, as follows:

Active/Programmed Recreation Turf: Irrigated lawn grass in an active/programmed recreation area on homeowner association-owned or managed property at a public park or water park (excluding park streetscape and community frontage areas). Turf on these properties must be 1,500 contiguous square feet or greater; and co-located with facilities, including but not limited to trash bins, benches, tables, walking paths and/or other recreational amenities. The turf must be located at least 10 feet from a public or private street or interior facing parking lot unless the contiguous turf areas at least 30 feet in all dimensions or the turf is immediately adjacent to an athletic field.

Ms. Pellegrino explained that the original definition of active/programmed recreation turf required the turf to be fenced, mainly with regards to schools. This requirement was removed because fenced turf at schools already met the other criteria in the definition.

Athletic Field Turf: Irrigated lawn grass used as a programmed sports field or for physical education or intramural use that is 1,500 contiguous square feet or greater, not less than 30 feet in any dimension, and located at a school, daycare, youth recreation center, senior center, public park, private park, water park or religious institution. Athletic field turf may be located less than 10 feet from a public or private street or interior facing parking lot if the contiguous turf area is less than 30 feet in all dimensions.

Designated Use Turf Area: Irrigated lawn grass designated for special use at cemeteries and mortuaries.

Golf Course Play Turf: Irrigated lawn grass at a golf course in driving range is chipping and putting greens comma tee boxes comma greens comma fairways and rough.

Pet Relief Turf: Irrigated lawn grass in a property providing commercial and retail services for pets that is designated for pet use (such as veterinarians or boarding facilities). Pet relief turf may not exceed 200 square feet.

Playground Turf: Irrigated lawn grass in designated play areas with playground amenities, including but not limited to slides, swings and climbing structures on homeowner association owned or managed property or at a public park, water park, school, daycare, youth recreation center, senior center or religious institution. Playground turf may be located less than 10 feet from a public or private street if fenced.

Resident Area Turf: Up to 150 square feet of irrigated lawn grass per dwelling unit at multi-family residential properties, commercial/multi-family mixed use properties, extended stay hotels/motels, or assisted living and rehabilitation centers used by tenants for recreation and leisure. Resident area turf must be in areas reasonably accessible for active use by residents and therefore may not be located in streetscape frontages, parking lots, roundabouts, medians, driveways and other non-accessible or exclusive use areas such as commercial courtyards.

Ms. Pellegrino explained that this definition was amended to include extended stay hotels/motels, as they are generally used as a housing option as opposed to an amenity for tourists. Turf at mixed use properties,

such as turf at an office park where people also live, was also included as a result of feedback from the committee. This turf must be accessible by residents and not solely used by commercial tenants.

David Strickland asked if a business hotel would fit into this category. Ms. Pellegrino responded that there are very few of these types of properties, where, for example, an apartment is next to a hotel with adjacent turf, but that the turf must be appropriate for the people living there.

Ms. Pellegrino then provided information on functional turf waiver eligibility and the waiver process.

Brian Walsh asked if a programmable area attached to a commercial property, such as the turf fields at Downtown Summerlin, would require a waiver. Ms. Pellegrino acknowledged that it isn't possible to craft definitions to cover every instance, but that this particular property would require a waiver.

Dale Hahn referenced wedding lawns at golf courses and asked if they might fall under "Designated Use Area Turf." Ms. Pellegrino responded that those types of areas have been discussed and will require a waiver. She added that the waiver eligibility would depend largely upon how often the turf in the area is used.

Scott Black commented that many parks have incorporated pet parks, which are also used for pet relief, and asked if the pet relief definition should be considered functional within a public park. Ms. Pellegrino responded that pet relief areas are limited to 200 square feet and are intended for use at veterinary offices, while dog parks would fall within "active/programmed recreation turf."

Ms. Pellegrino then discussed waiver applications, the review process, and reconsideration and appeal in the instance that an entity is not satisfied with staff's decision. She indicated that anyone could apply for a waiver for functional turf that provides a recreational benefit to the community and meets the functional turf definition.

Tena Cameron asked if there would be considerations for time extensions if a non-functional turf conversion project cannot be completed within the five-year timeframe. Ms. Pellegrino responded that the AB356 legislation does not require the committee to make a recommendation regarding extensions of time, but it does give the Authority Board the ability to approve or deny such extensions.

Zane Marshall, Director of Resources, led a discussion covering several properties illustrating various examples of functional and nonfunctional turf, the reasons for certain turf areas being defined as nonfunctional, and the square footage of nonfunctional turf at each property. He discussed examples at the following types of properties, which can be found in the presentation included with these minutes:

- Hospitals and medical offices
- Commercial and retail centers
- Hotels, motels and resorts
- Golf courses
- Government facilities
- Homeowners' associations
- Religious institutions
- Cemeteries and mortuaries
- Schools and daycares
- Youth recreation and senior centers
- Multi-family residential
- Assisted living and rehabilitation centers
- Parks
- Commercial and industrial office parks

Mr. Marshall also discussed potential waiver considerations for the different property types.

Dale Hahn said that when TPC participated in the Authority's turf removal program, they were required to do a technical drainage study, and that any turf within a drainage plain was required to be kept. He asked if drainage control should be addressed, and whether it would be subject to a waiver or handled up front. Ms. Pellegrino responded that those instances would be best handled through the waiver process because it is a site-specific issue as to whether there is another alternative for that turf. She added that the Regional Flood Control District has provided a map of the areas in which turf is required for flood control, and that most of it is, by definition, functional turf.

Dale Hahn asked if a cemetery that removes nonfunctional turf, but then wants to expand in the future would be able to do so. Ms. Pellegrino responded that cemeteries install turf as they develop a unit, and that it would still be considered functional. Mr. Marshall added that if they have relinquished a conservation easement as part of the Water Smart Landscapes Program, that easement can be removed through reimbursement at a later date.

Ms. Pellegrino then asked the committee if there was anything else that needed to be discussed before moving forward with recommendations.

David Strickland commented that an office park that would need to completely relandscape its property, to comply with AB356, could incur significant costs. Ms. Pellegrino acknowledged that certain projects would require significant capital costs and added that at last legislative session, the Authority worked to make water efficiency improvements eligible for Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE) loans, which will allow property owners to make water efficiency improvements with a low interest loan tied to the property.

David Strickland thanked Authority staff for taking him to the Springs Preserve and educating him on sustainable and aesthetically pleasing alternatives to non-functional turf.

Mauricia Baca said that people have reached out to her about the potential impact that turf removal could have on wildlife. She said that there is an educational opportunity that comes with turf removal, and planting replacement species that are both desert appropriate and promote wildlife outcomes.

Ms. Pellegrino said that a draft of recommendations will be ready for discussion at the committee's November 17 meeting, with the goal of the Authority Board considering the recommendations on January 20, 2022.

Larry Fossan stated that committee members would need to take this information to their constituents and asked if the Authority would be able to provide maps (such as those in the presentation) of functional turf, as well as non-functional turf removal opportunities. Mr. Marshall responded that staff has the capacity to produce such maps.

David Strickland asked if there is consideration of non-functional turf alternatives that don't use any water. Ms. Pellegrino discussed an incentive program in which parks can remove turf and put in a sporting facility or something similar.

Scott Black commented that this process lays the foundation for a successful future, but that it's complex because the community is being asked to do something completely new and different than what has been done historically. He asked if a sample financial illustration from each category could be provided, covering the turf removal process from beginning to end, including project and rebate costs. Ms. Pellegrino responded that the Authority has data from past conversions that could be shared. J.C. Davis, Enterprise

Conservation Division Manager, said that on approximately one-third of turf removal projects, the Water Smart Landscapes rebate has covered the entire cost, and that for the remainder of the projects, the rebate has generally covered about 75 percent of the project cost.

Larry Fossan said that these turf replacements will not only result in water savings but will also yield significant savings in maintenance costs.

Brian Walsh reiterated said that this isn't a question of if we choose to comply, but that it is something that must be done.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members from the public wishing to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

From: David Gray <davidgray414@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2021 4:35 PM
To: &PublicComment
Subject: {EXTERNAL} Fwd: Considerations For Possible Future Turf Waiver & Exemption Requests

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: David Gray <davidgray414@aol.com>
Date: October 19, 2021 at 3:47:37 PM PDT
To: publiccomment@snwa.com
Cc: stacy standley <StacyStandley@hotmail.com>, lisam@spanishtrail.net, Debra George <dgeorgecpa@aol.com>
Subject: Considerations For Possible Future Turf Waiver & Exemption Requests

To: Nonfunctional Turf Removal Advisory Committee

For over 15 years I have had the privilege and joy of living in one of the unique communities in the Las Vegas Valley - Spanish Trail. What makes it so unique and desirable is the way it was designed and landscaped over 35 years ago as an "oasis in the desert". Yes - this was done before the seriousness of our ongoing drought but over the years the community has done its part proactively in terms of turf reduction and water management. To date, we have removed over 500,000 square feet of turf and received an award from SNWA for our water conscious landscaping (which we proudly display in our HOA office). Having been President of one of the HOA Boards I was personally involved and participated in many of the decisions that were made.

I realize the dire drought situation we are in and know that the various Sub Associations along with our Master Board are drawing up plans for additional "nonfunctional" turf removal to comply with the law that is in place. Because of the way our community is designed - I hope the committee will give careful consideration to any future waivers and exemptions that any of our Boards may request for the reasons noted below:

- IMPACT ON OUR MATURE TREES: We have literally thousands of 35 year old trees surrounded by grass that are conditioned for certain sprinkler watering patterns. A very elaborate drip irrigation system in a grid network would need to be installed to mitigate any damage and stress to the trees. An arborist tells me that for the first few years there would be very little water savings as the drip system would have to run excessively to insure deep watering while avoiding stress to the tree. Even at that - there is no guarantee that the tree would not go into shock, catch a disease and potentially die with the need for removal.

- GREENBELTS - OUR BACKYARDS: Again, our community was designed so that many homes face very large park-like areas that are consistently used for rest and relaxation - including dog walking, playing frisbee / catch or just taking in the wonderful views and vistas that we enjoy. Much like the backyards of individual homes that are apparently exempt - these greenbelts are the backyards for our townhome communities.

- PROPERTY VALUES AND FINANCIAL IMPACT: I realize the goal of turf reduction is to save water however again, because of the design of our community, we are also subject to the possibility of a significant financial impact due to: the possible loss and cost of removing diseased / dying mature trees, the cost of installing an elaborate drip system to maintain them, the cost of premium drought tolerant landscape to maintain our landscape standards and the possible effect on property values due to a huge esthetic change - an environment quite different from the one that drove many homeowners to purchase here.

- IMPACT TO OUR FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS: Our community, as well as most of Las Vegas, is in the Pacific Flyway - the path that migratory birds take when flying North to South. Over the years, our community has become home to a large flock of geese that regularly feed on our plentiful grassy areas along with our permanent duck population.

I am sure our community will step forward with what we feel is appropriate for the next phase of nonfunctional turf reduction. However, I am hoping for the reasons stated above a close look will be given to the special circumstances and effect on Spanish Trail should any of our Boards make that request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Gray
7211 Mission Hills Drive

Sent from my iPad