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Natrona County projects get the go-ahead from Wyoming Business Council

CASPER – Economic development projects in Natrona County were recommended for better than \$1.5 million in state and federal grant funding today during the Wyoming Business Council's board of directors meeting in Buffalo.

Three Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) requests from Natrona County were put before the Business Council Board of Directors, Thursday. The Business Council administers the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), which is a federally funded pass through grant program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The town of Bar Nunn was approved for a \$453,380 CDBG Infrastructure grant for the purpose of installing a turn lane on the Salt Creek Highway. The grant will facilitate the opening of Motor Power Equipment, a full-service truck and trailer dealership. Motor Power Equipment proposes to construct a 20,000-square foot Kenworth parts and service facility. The turning lane will satisfy a Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) requirement to install a turning lane on the Salt Creek highway access road to the project site.

The Economic Development Joint Powers Board and CAEDA offer financial support to the project's required cash match.

The Town of Mills submitted two CDBG grant requests and was approved for one.

The town of Mills was approved by the WBC board for a \$500,000 grant to extend a current cul-de-sac on 3rd Avenue and Pontiac Street. The grant will fund the extension of a road to be used for emergency services and general traffic flow. The extension of the road will also open up the area to a housing development with between 100-200 platted lots for workforce housing.

The WBC board denied a \$398,890 request to fund an ultraviolet light disinfection system and emergency generator for their wastewater plant.

In all, the Business Council board reviewed 26 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program applications totaling \$3,683,170. Before making the final recommendation to the board, staff reviews each application, conducts a site visit (except CDBG planning grants) and presents to a board subcommittee.

The Business Council Board of Directors reviewed and recommended one Business Ready Community grant for Natrona County. It was a \$617,483 Community Readiness grant to install 30,000 linear feet of fiber optic cable at the Natrona County International Airport's business park. The fiber optic cable will provide high-speed connectivity and phone service to current and future tenants in the park. CAEDA supported the grant effort through grant review and a letter of support.

Business Council board recommendations for Business Ready Community (BRC) projects will be forwarded to the State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB) for final decision on June 16 in Cheyenne. SLIB is made up of the five statewide elected officials: Gov. Matt Mead, Secretary of State Max Maxfield, State Treasurer Joe Meyer, State Auditor, Cynthia Cloud and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Cindy Hill. The grant was one of nine BRC applications totaling \$9,214,606 which was reviewed by the Business Council's board of directors.

CAEDA is a public-private partnership which helps to recruit and retain businesses to and in the Natrona County, Wyoming area. CAEDA offers itself as a referral agency to anyone seeking assistance to relocate or expand their business to the Casper, Wyoming area.



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