



Sunproof America!™
www.skincancer.org

reviewjournal.com

LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL
Member Center

Nevada News | Sports | Business | Living | Opinion | Neon | Image | Classifieds

Subscribe to the R-I
\$52 for 52 weeks!



Find a Job ■
Find a Car ■
Find a Home ■

SAVE THIS EMAIL THIS PRINT THIS MOST POPULAR RSS FEEDS

Nov. 17, 2005

Copyright © Las Vegas Review-Journal

Land prices continue surge at BLM auction

By [HUBBLE SMITH](#)
[REVIEW-JOURNAL](#)



Olympia Group President Garry Goett is congratulated by others Wednesday after winning an auction for a parcel of land in North Las Vegas. Photo by [John Locher](#).

Real estate analysts across the nation have been warning about a real estate "bubble," but land prices in the Las Vegas area show no signs of dropping.

And land prices in many outlying areas of the valley are beginning to show the same kind of appreciation rates as seen on the Strip or downtown Las Vegas, judging from some of the final bids at Wednesday's Bureau of Land Management public auction.

The largest bid, for \$639 million,

came from Olympia Group, developer of Southern Highlands in the south Las Vegas Valley, for the largest tract, 2,675 acres in North Las Vegas. Olympia's bid came to \$238,878 an acre, which was higher than the \$195,000 per acre

Advertisement

LOOKING FOR A JOB?

- 1000's of jobs
- email alerts
- online resume posting
- save ads for later viewing

It's not just a job, it's your career!!

JOBS TODAY
ONLINE

Featured Jobs

Recent Editions

W Th F S Su M T

>> Search the site

NEWS

[Today's Headlines](#)

- [Obituaries](#)
- [Nevada Legislature](#)
- [Municipal Elections 2005](#)
- [Las Vegas Housing Market](#)
- [Las Vegas Centennial](#)
- [Judging the Judges](#)
- [Yucca Mountain](#)
- [Operation Iraqi Freedom](#)
- [Opinion Polls](#)
- [E-briefing](#)

Instantly book tee-times at your favorite golf courses in the greater Las Vegas metro area.

NO BOOKING FEES!

CHANNEL DIRECTORY

▶ [Arts & Entertainment](#)

- ▶ [Auto Guide](#)
- ▶ [Books](#)
- ▶ [Casinos & Hotels](#)
- ▶ [Celebrations](#)
- ▶ [Community](#)
- ▶ [Coupons](#)
- ▶ [E-forums](#)
- ▶ [Employment](#)
- ▶ [Food & Dining](#)
- ▶ [Fun & Games](#)
- ▶ [Health & Fitness](#)
- ▶ [Home & Garden](#)
- ▶ [Legal Center](#)
- ▶ [Money](#)
- ▶ [Obituaries](#)
- ▶ [Photo & Page Store](#)
- ▶ [Personals](#)
- ▶ [Real Estate](#)
- ▶ [Recreation](#)
- ▶ [Relocation](#)
- ▶ [Shopping](#)
- ▶ [Technology](#)
- ▶ [Traffic & Transportation](#)
- ▶ [Travel](#)
- ▶ [Weather](#)
- ▶ [Weddings](#)
- ▶ [Yellow Pages](#)
- ▶ [About the site](#)

appraisal price set on the parcel.

Some of the smaller parcels sold during the auction at Cashman Center went for more than \$400,000 an acre, though.

A 5-acre parcel fronting Las Vegas Boulevard south of Erie Avenue went for \$10.3 million, more than \$2 million an acre, and a 10-acre parcel on Edna Avenue between Durango Drive and Cimarron Road sold for \$10.8 million, or more than \$1 million an acre. The least expensive piece was 3.75 acres off U.S. Highway 95 near Morris Street with no access that went for \$125,000.

In all, the BLM sold 2,982 acres under the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act for \$791.3 million and an 80-acre piece in Laughlin under the Federal Lands Transaction Facilitation Act for \$8 million, leading one observer at the auction to ask: "Bubble? What bubble?"

Olympia opened the bidding for the prime North Las Vegas parcel at the appraised market value of \$522.4 million and battled Focus Property Group for less than 10 minutes, each raising the price by \$1 million a shot.

Merv Boyd, land sales manager for the BLM in Las Vegas, said he had a nightmarish vision from a previous auction in which a large piece in Henderson didn't sell.

"There was a little drama, a little hesitation," Boyd said of the silence that befell Cashman Center immediately after the parcel was put up for auction. "I think my heart skipped a beat."

The average price for the North Las Vegas piece is far below the \$298,000 an acre that Focus paid for BLM land near Kyle Canyon at the February auction, but nearly 10 times what American Nevada Co. and Del Webb paid for land in the same area of North Las Vegas five years ago.

Advertisement

INSURANCE

Make:

Model:

QUOTE MATCH

GO

© 2005

Contact the R-J

- [Subscribe](#)
- [Report a delivery problem](#)
- [Put the paper on hold](#)
- [Advertise with us](#)
- [Report a news tip/press release](#)
- [Send a letter to the editor](#)
- [Print the announcement forms](#)
- [Jobs at the R-J](#)

"We run our models. We know what the land is worth, and we pay that price," Olympia President Garry Goett said after the auction. "We think it's a great opportunity in North Las Vegas for two wonderful communities."

The parcel was sold as one piece, though 602 acres are on the west side of the master-planned Aliante community developed by North Valley Enterprises, a joint venture between American Nevada and Del Webb, and 2,073 acres are on the east side.

American Nevada, which poured more than \$100 million of infrastructure work into that area, did not enter the bidding.

Goett said his partnership in the North Las Vegas development includes home builders American West, D.R. Horton, Pacific Homes and Astoria Homes.

A development agreement with the city of North Las Vegas, including density zoning, will have to be finalized before any work begins on the communities, he said.

Olympia purchased 4,630 acres in Mesquite for \$14.5 million at a BLM auction in February and an adjoining 960-acre parcel for \$5.7 million. Larry Canarelli, president of American West, accompanied Goett at the Mesquite auction.

Tom DeVore, president of development for Focus, said it was hard to get the same group of builders who went in on the Kyle Canyon and Henderson land to show much interest in North Las Vegas.

"We were interested to a point. There are certain environment issues related to this property that only makes it worth so much to our guys," he said. "Builders have to get houses out of the ground as soon as possible, and this could take a while."

A 300-acre conservation area has been set aside by the BLM to protect the endangered Las Vegas bear poppy and buckwheat plants that were discovered on the land.

North Las Vegas Councilwoman Stephanie Smith said she learned a lot from working with developers of Aliante and looks forward to working with Olympia Group.

"It's another great opportunity to keep forging our new destiny," she said. "We're still the most affordable community in the valley, but we want the other end as well for the opportunity to move up."

Travis Nelson, assistant vice president at Nevada Title Co., said the price for the big piece in North Las Vegas was in line with that of other parcels of that size.

However, some of the 2.5-acre parcels, if they were in a good location, went for more than people thought they would, Nelson said. Many of those in the southwest and northwest valley topped \$1 million, with one as high as \$1.9 million.

Eight of the parcels did not sell.

"I think people are being more selective, and they're not willing to pay higher prices if the property is not in a good location," Nelson said. "Stuff around Kyle Canyon went higher than people thought. The beltway opens up access to that area."

The BLM sold one of the six parcels in Laughlin that did not sell at a June auction. The 80-acre piece went for \$8 million, setting a new standard for Laughlin at \$100,000 an acre.

"That's good for the town of Laughlin," Boyd said. "This is the second attempt with the Laughlin land. We may go back and look at those pieces to see if they need to be reconfigured."

Seventeen parcels were withdrawn from the auction by Clark County, including one that was planned for a park. They will be offered again in the spring auction.

Since 1998, the BLM has held 20 auctions and sold more than 13,000 acres, generating \$2.78 billion in sales. Under the land management act, \$108.7 million has been paid to the Nevada General Education Fund and \$203.8 million has been paid to the Southern Nevada Water Authority.



[Nevada News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business](#) | [Living](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Neon](#) | [Classifieds](#)
[Current Edition](#) | [Archive](#) | [Search](#) | [Print Edition](#) | [Online Edition](#)
[Contact the R-J](#) | [HOME](#)

Copyright © Las Vegas Review-Journal, 1997 - 2005
[Stephens Media Group Privacy Statement](#)