



## Memorandum

**To:** Mayor and Town Council  
**From:** Town Manager's Office  
**Date:** September 1, 2020  
**Subject:** Vail Economic Recovery Efforts in Response to the Public Health Crisis

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the memo and presentation is to provide updates to a number of the Vail Economic Recovery Efforts in response to the Public Health Crisis by sharing information on key areas of planning, as follows:

- Eagle County Public Health Orders Update
- Special Events Update
- Music Entertainment in Villages and Lower Bench Activation Update
- Commercial Rental Relief Fund Update
- Future Economic Recovery Efforts Proposals Update  
Includes: winter operations for restaurants, gift card program, communications effort supporting use of face coverings (TOV purchase and distribution face coverings)
- Proposed Funding for Economic Recovery Programs

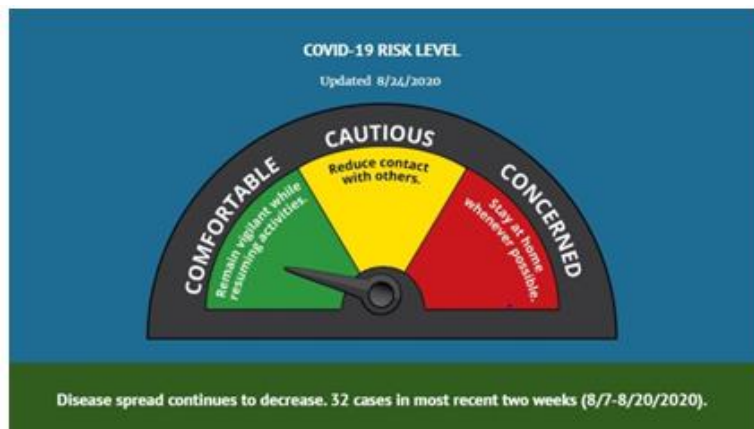
### II. BACKGROUND

Town staff has presented bi-monthly updates to town council about ongoing planning efforts in key areas in response to the updated public health orders from Eagle County. This memo addresses several economic recovery tactics that were supported by the Vail Economic Advisory Council, the Town Manager and Economic Development Offices. These programs have been initiated to stimulate Vail's business economy as well as support the community during these challenging times. The programming and tactics below are recommended in the context of the Town's Manager's Emergency Order and current Eagle County Public Health Orders.

### III. ECONOMIC RECOVERY TACTICS UPDATE

#### Eagle County Public Health Orders Update

Eagle County Public Health officials continue to monitor the number of positive cases of COVID-19 in Eagle County. A recent update notes that COVID transmission in Eagle County has begun to plateau and drop in the past few weeks and as of 8/24/2020 the Eagle County "Weekly Performance Indicator" was in the GREEN range indicating "comfortable and to remain vigilant while resuming activities", see chart below:



Eagle County public health officials continue to work with the state public health officials in creating parallel messaging about the orders and status of the public health crisis. Their collaborative efforts will help to streamline performance indicators and associated metrics and result in a move away from use of the transition trail map and an engagement with the state’s “Protect our Neighbors” Program and metrics. At this time, the current Eagle County public health orders in place are expected to remain the same throughout the Labor Day holiday weekend. The Eagle County School District began its school year this past week with both in-school and online learning activations. Some discussions are occurring about what might be expected regarding public health orders and the upcoming winter with the goal to balance public health concerns with economic vitality during the winter season. The Town continues to review and adjust both operational and economic recovery programming and tactics to comply with these orders. For more information and updates about the COVID-19 health crisis, access Eagle County’s website, [www.ecemergency.org](http://www.ecemergency.org).

### Special Events Update

The Commission on Special Events is simultaneously looking to maximize the end of the 2020 event season while looking ahead to 2021. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic a number of events have cancelled, returning money to the CSE budget. The CSE has reviewed new event proposals on an ongoing basis ranging from the Vail Wine Classic to Oktoberfest, to allocate the returned funds to support new and creative event proposals that have adapted to the public health orders. The Art on the Rockies Vail Fine Arts Festival took place August 21 – 23 in Lionshead. This was a new event and producer for the Town of Vail who was able to bring a new event to fruition in a short timeframe that fit within the public health guidelines. A new proposal will be reviewed at the September meeting for music entertainment in the villages and the Lower Bench of Ford Park. The 2021 event funding application has been published after being reviewed by the CSE. 2021 event applications are due at the end of September and will be reviewed and voted on at two special CSE meetings in October.

Staff is working with Public Health officials and event partners to try to determine what the future of events might look like in Vail. Among events in consideration are those addressing early season activation as well as contingency plans for existing events in anticipation of changing public health orders.

## **Music Entertainment in Villages and Lower Bench Activation Update**

Live music in the villages and at the Lower Bench of Ford Park has continued with enthusiastic support, presented and produced by High Altitude Entertainment (owner Scott Rednor). High Altitude Entertainment has submitted a new proposal to continue with activations both in Vail and Lionshead villages and at the Lower Bench through September. Additional funding of \$70,000 has been requested for 10 shows throughout September and focused on Friday-Sunday concerts. Funding for the initial concerts in July and August which included roughly 30 performances, as well as the additional September programming and production is included in the supplemental budget. The total amount allocated for the shakedown programming is \$140,000. A contract is included in the consent agenda for new proposal of September concerts. The production of the events has complied with public health orders in terms of social distancing and face covering requirements. Please access the Discover Vail website for the current calendar of events that depicts the music entertainment in the villages and at the lower bench: [www.DiscoverVail.com/events](http://www.DiscoverVail.com/events).

## **Commercial Rent Relief Program Update**

The program, that is designed to provide rent relief to commercial businesses in Vail through a shared model between tenant, landlord and the town, was developed by a subcommittee of the Vail Economic Advisory Council. The program provides rent relief based on a formula reflecting reduction in revenue versus same month last year and is available for the period August 1 – November 30, 2020. Economic Development staff has been engaging with numerous local business owners and landlords to answer questions and provide additional information on the program requirements and process. The online application, developed in conjunction with finance staff, is scheduled to go live on September 1, 2020.

## **Future Economic Recovery Efforts Suggestions**

Staff has worked with members of the Vail Economic Advisory Council to explore ideas and develop initiatives to address economic recovery to continue support of the business community in light of the continued public health crisis. Ongoing discussions with several departments and business owners are occurring regarding each effort. Below are some updates about programming and next steps.

- Winter Operations Enhancements
  - ❖ Explore the idea of tenting existing expanded premises for restaurants to provide additional indoor dining with social distancing for the winter months, with a focus on dinner service.
  - ❖ Create “warming area locations” with vertical patio heaters for guests to utilize as places to eat during the day and /or wait for dining during the evening in the villages.

Town departments, including Fire and Economic Development, have met with several restaurant owners to discuss the idea of securing expanded restaurant premises throughout the winter months with the installation of tents. Social distancing requirements and the 50% limit on operational capacity for restaurants continue to place major burdens on the viability of Vail restaurants, especially moving into the winter season. A walking tour with town staff and vendors for tents and propane products was completed to explore the idea of “tenting” several restaurants in both Lionshead and Vail Village. There were several considerations identified during the tour and which continue to receive careful attention by the group:

- ✓ Town of Vail would help facilitate the implementation of the program by advising about fire and building codes and approval of final tent request submittals.
- ✓ There is likely only a select number of restaurants that would benefit from such use of expanded premises and restaurant owners would need to determine the value of the tents to their business, in many cases, the use of a tent will only provide for a marginal increase in restaurant occupancy.
- ✓ Suggested economic recovery effort would be temporary in nature and align with active public health orders.
- ✓ There is a need to evaluate the ability to maintain the tents during heavy snowfalls and how that aligns with public works snow removal in villages and vehicle and transit circulation.
- ✓ The vendors are seeing a high demand for tents and propane across the state during the health crisis.
- ✓ The vendors are seeing a high demand for tents and tent heaters across the state during the health crisis and there will be a limited “type” of tent product available.
- ✓ Maintaining the necessary supply of propane throughout the village will be logistically challenging.
- ✓ Some discussions ensued about creating locations in the villages for guests to use for dining outside during the day and/or use for gathering while waiting for restaurant reservations during the evening.
- ✓ Loading and Delivery impacts, currently loading and delivery in certain zones occurs and is accommodated with tables being moved into spaces after loading times expire. Tents at these locations will not be able to move in and out daily.
- ✓ Other special event impacts: the installation of tents, may impact the footprint of special events.

The town will spend the next several weeks performing additional research and vetting the idea with stakeholders, including town departments, businesses and potential vendors, to prepare a proposal that would suggest components addressing tent permitting, funding, and operations and identifying restaurants and areas that would meet the objectives and comply with code requirements and public health orders.

- **Town of Vail Gift Card Program to Boost the Shoulder Season**  
Members of the Vail Economic Advisory Council recommended the town consider a gift card program that would supply a credit to individuals to support Vail businesses during the shoulder season. Businesses would need to sign up online to participate in the gift card program where \$25 gift cards would be distributed to two key groups: those in need (community) and guests of Vail lodging properties (guests). The program met with success in the City of Aspen where average return on each \$25 card was more than \$50, with an average sale of \$80. Staff will present the program to VEAC at their next meeting on September 8 and will present a detailed proposal including costs and requirements to town council for approval on September 15.
- **Town of Vail Communications Effort to Provide and Encourage Use of Face Coverings**  
Town council, the VEAC and local business leaders have suggested the town pursue a comprehensive program to provide Vail branded face coverings to local businesses on either a complimentary or cost basis, and to support this effort with a robust and approachable communications program to encourage the use of face coverings. Staff is researching procurement of branded masks and will present a draft plan to the Vail Economic Advisory Council for feedback and recommendations. Staff intends to return to present the proposed program along with costs to town council for approval on September 15.

### **Proposed Funding for Economic Recovery Programs**

Town staff continue to evaluate several economic recovery programs referenced above and note that funding proposals will be available for second reading of the ordinance adopting the supplemental budget. At this time, there has been \$70K included to accommodate the September programming with High Altitude Entertainment's music activation proposal.