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## Memorandum

To: Vail Town Council

From: Mark Novak, Fire Chief

Date: April 5, 2022

Subject: Fire Free Five Community Assistance Program

**I. Purpose:**

The purpose of this memo is to describe the establishment and implementation of a funding program to reimburse property owners for costs associated with implementing the Fire Free Five.

**II. Background**

Creating a 5' non-combustible zone is one of the most important actions a property owner can take to reduce the risk of structural loss due to wildland fire. Preventing such loss is particularly important in the Town of Vail due to the proximity of structures to each other, which increases risk of a wildland fire initiated wildland-urban conflagration.

On March 15, 2022, the Vail Town Council directed Vail Fire and Emergency Services Staff to establish a program to help offset the cost associated with creating a Fire Free Five (FFF) around structures in the Town of Vail.

**III. Proposed Program-Fire Free Five Community Assistance Program**

A. Allocate Real Estate Transfer Tax funds to create a Town of Vail funded opportunity to offset the costs associated with creating the Fire Free Five around structures. The requested funding for this program for 2022 is \$150,000. This funding is included in the second reading of the March 2022 Supplemental (Ordinance No. 3, series of 2022).

- Additional funding may be requested in subsequent years based upon community usage of this program.

B. The program will be known as the Fire Free Five Community Assistance Program (FFFCAP).

C. The FFFCAP will be structured to reimburse property owners for 75% of the costs of labor and materials (25% cash match) associated with implementing the FFF up to specified limits based upon the type of structure.

D. The proposed limits are as follows:

- a. Single Family Dwelling: \$ 2,000 maximum
- b. Duplex: \$3,000 maximum
- c. Multi-family dwelling/complex 1-20 units: \$5,000 maximum
- d. Multi-family dwelling/complex > 20 units: \$10,000 maximum
- e. Commercial structure: \$5,000 maximum

Creation of the FFF around outbuildings is an eligible expense but will not be eligible for a separate reimbursement.

E. The rebate process will be as follows:

1. Property owner submits a FFFCAP application to VFES
2. VFES staff conducts an evaluation of existing conditions and issues a tree removal permit if necessary.
  - a. VFES staff will ensure joint property signoff for projects involving more than one owner.
  - b. Staff will provide information on considerations for nesting wildlife.
3. Property owner completes activities necessary to create FFF around entire structure.
4. VFES staff conducts follow-up evaluation to confirm that FFF implementation is complete.
5. Property owner submits receipts for contracted labor and materials to VFES (receipts must be submitted within 90 days of initial FFFCAP site evaluation).
6. TOV Finance Department processes payment to property owner.

#### **IV. Staff Recommendation**

Approve the establishment and funding of the Fire Free Five Community Assistance Program in the amount of \$150,000.