



FAIRFAX TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE May 7, 2025
PREPARED FOR Mayor and Town Council
PREPARED BY Heather Abrams, Town Manager, and Michael Vivrette, Finance Director
SUBJECT Receive Informational Report on Town Credit Card Use

RECOMMENDATION

Review the Informational Report on Town Credit Card Use.

BACKGROUND

In 2010, Council approved use of Town credit cards for to reduce costs associated with check issuance. Nearly all California local governments use the same highly reputable credit card issuer that provides a distinctive look including "For Official Use Only" printed on the front of the cards. These cards are commonly referred to as CalCards. A copy of the 2010 staff report, which outlines the checks and balances utilized to ensure appropriate use of the cards, is attached to this report.

Fifteen years later, the reasons to use CalCards have multiplied. Reasons for using a CalCard for official town purchases include:

- Processing credit card charges save the cost of checks and check processing issues such as tracking outstanding checks.
- CalCard is a cash back program providing funds to the town
- Many vendors no longer accept purchase orders, checks, nor cash, for example:
 - Common software vendors (such as Adobe) and subscriptions,
 - Fairfax lacks an office supply store, so office supplies are ordered online and shipped
- Several store charge programs (such as Fairfax Lumber) have been converted to credit card payment
- Registration for local government trainings and meetings (i.e. POST, CalCities, etc) are done online with credit card payments
- CalCard program is tailored to local governments, facilitating:
 - Needed controls, and
 - Financial administration

DISCUSSION

The number of Town CalCards has decreased from 28 in 2010 to 26 in 2025.

Of the 26 CalCards, 19 are in the Police Department, two are with the Recreation staff, one is with the Town Hall front desk staff, one is with the Planning Director, one is with the Clerk staff, one is with the Town Manager, and one is with the Finance Director. There is an overall Town limit beyond which the total of all CalCards cannot extend.

The monthly credit extended to each CalCard is also tightly controlled, and aligns with the position's responsibilities. For example, the Finance Director's CalCard is used for FEMA and insurance payments, repair supplies purchased by the DPW crew on the Town's Fairfax Lumber account are charged to this CalCard. The Town Manager's CalCard is used to book Council Member and Town Manager trainings,

conferences, meals and travel required for those trainings and meetings; in addition, the Town Manager must be at the ready if major disaster supplies are needed. The Clerk staff's CalCard is used for payment of online only services such as Zoom, Constant Contact newsletter platform, etc. Calcards for Town Hall front desk and Planning are used primarily for supplies and minor training expenses. Police department CalCards, while issued to all full-time employees and some select part-time employees, do not hold on to their physical cards. Instead CalCards are kept secure by the Chief of Police and provided to select employees on a case by case basis for needed and previously approved circumstances. No charges can be made by any individual employee unless approved by the Chief of Police. Examples of charges that are re-occurring include costs for departmental supplies, building services as well as POST trainings and travel/parking/fuel and other associated costs. CalCards in Recreation are used for event and program supplies, such as candy and eggs for the Spring egg hunt, paints and supplies for Alice in Wonderland Tea, as are supplies ordered by Recreation on behalf of the Fairfax Festival because the Town is the Festival's fiscal agent.

The Town's total CalCard monthly payment between April 2024 and March 2025 was \$24,120.56, divided by 26 cards equals \$928 average per card per month. The Town pays the total balance in full each month, so no finance fees nor interest are accrued.


CalCards can only be held by staff responsible for Town purchases and they cannot be used for personal purposes. Each month the Finance Department receives a "master bill" of all the charges on any Town Cal Cards used and each CalCard holder receives a "sub bill" of all the charges to that CalCard. The employee is responsible for fully coding and justifying each expense, including attaching all receipts which need to be coded and justified to the CalCard bill. Each Department head reviews the coding and justification before sending it to Finance for additional review and payment. For example, a CalCities training for Council Members would be coded on the CalCard bill and on the receipt as 01-111-861 corresponding to the budget code, and a justification or description would be added to the receipt such as *Town Manager's CalCard for Council Member Cutrano to attend CalCities Academy*. The budget coding is used to account for expenses reported by budget code monthly reports.

ATTACHMENT

2010 Staff Report Regarding Cal Cards

**TOWN OF FAIRFAX
STAFF REPORT**

To: Mayor, Members of the Town Council

From: Michael Rock, Town Manager 
Laurie Ireland-Ashley, Finance Director

Date: September 11, 2010

Subject: Discussion/Consideration of approval of participation in Cal Purchasing Card Program

RECOMMENDATION

Discussion/ Consideration of approval of participation in Cal Purchasing Card Program

DISCUSSION

The Town currently cuts checks for each individual invoice or payment. The Town currently has a single credit card for any purchases requiring such method of payment. The cost of the check issuance is approx \$50 per check. The cost of the credit card is greatly reduced as it can be paid once for several purchases.

The Cal Card Program is utilized throughout the State by municipalities in an effort to control both costs and streamline processes. Under the Cal Card Program each selected employee would be assigned a purchasing limit (\$1,000 for example) and they would be issued a purchasing card with their name and the Town of Fairfax name.

All purchases are controlled both globally and individually. Globally the program will not let anyone purchase anything at selected "off limits" vendors. Individually you can additionally limit what vendors are authorized – only Public Works would be able to rent equipment.

The monthly itemized bills (multiple vendors on one invoice) would come to both each department head and the Finance Director (Internal Audit cross-check). After coding by the Department Head the invoice goes to Finance to be paid. All coded bills will be reviewed by the Town Manager (Internal Audit cross-check). One check would be cut for all the current monthly purchases by the departments.

The month end check register would show the check payment for Council review. If we pay by electronic check the payment would show on the month end EFT register. Fairfax has been authorized by the Cal Card reviewing board to be eligible to participate in the program pending Council approval.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Savings on \$50 per check for each vendor purchase that can be made on the Cal Card. Consolidated invoice review saves Department Head time, which is higher end dollars. Monthly Audit review time savings as all activity is consolidated for quick cross check, and can be hard coded in the system to increase efficiency.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Cal Card Limits and Users



Assignment Template - Bank 1425

Use this form to set up a new Purchasing Card Cardholder. Columns in blue are

REQUIRED fields. Columns in grey are Bank Use Only.

Drag the mouse over the column header below to view the definition of each

Client ID	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Organization	Department	Empl - Optional 1	Monthly Limit
	IRELAND-ASHLEY	LAURIE		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0241	FINANCE	010000
	ROCK	MICHAEL	K	TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0211	TOWN MANAGER	025000
	MORIN	CHRISTOPHER	E	TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	010000
	O'CALLAGHAN	JAMES		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	003000
	BAKER	STUART		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	003000
	POWELL	CYNTHIA		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	003000
	TUSCHER	RHONDA		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	ROBERSON	MARJONNE		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	SUTHERLAND	ROBERT		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	CADE	WILLIAM		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	ARCE	ELMER		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	HOWLETT	MARK		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	TABARANZA	RICO		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	STEVENS	KATHLEEN		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	RAMIREZ	ANUAR		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	CROW	GUY		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	METCALF	CHARLES		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	SHORT	SHELDON		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	CLARKE	THOMAS		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0411	POLICE	002000
	WILKIE	KATHLEEN		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0510	PUBLIC WORKS	010000
	BRUCE	THOMAS		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0511	PUBLIC WORKS	001000
	CONTRATTI	RUDY		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0611	PUBLIC WORKS	001000
	ANDERSON	JUDY		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0221	TOWN CLERK	001000
	MOORE	JAMES	M	TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0311	PLANNING	002500
	NEAL	LINDA		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0311	PLANNING	001000
	LOCKABY	MARK		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0321	BUILDING	001000
	WATERS	SUSAN		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0715	TOWN HALL	001000
	TRAPALIS-BAIRD	MARIA		TOWN OF FAIRFAX	0217	VOLUNTEER/REC	001000