



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

July 7, 2021

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Authorize the Town Manager to create and implement a vegetation management grant program to assist seniors, disabled, and lower income households

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Town Manager to create and implement a vegetation management grant program and allocate an initial \$25,000 to the program.

DISCUSSION

The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) is conducting Chipper Day events for every Fairfax neighborhood from May through September. MWPA is also in the process of developing a grant program to assist senior and lower income households with brush clearance on their properties. However, since the MWPA program is not available yet, Vice-Mayor Hellman and Councilmember Goddard discussed the creation of a local program at the Council's budget workshop. At its June 16th meeting to discuss this item, the Council assigned an ad-hoc subcommittee of Vice-Mayor Hellman and Councilmember Goddard to work with staff to develop the program parameters.

Below are the recommended parameters that staff will use to develop a program:

- Grants are available for brush clearing/tree trimming, but not home hardening.
- Program eligibility: Senior (65+) /Disabled and lower income households (i.e., extremely low- 35% of median and very low- 60% of median household income, adjusted for household size based on HUD guidelines.
- Homes can be owner occupied or rental in Fairfax.
- Grant amount: Up to \$1,000.
- No matching requirement.
- Grants are on a reimbursement basis.
- Program application will require before / after photos of areas to be cleared; if no photos receipts will be required.
- Applicants will self-certify/attest their eligibility for the grant.
- On-line application, but hard copies will be available.
- Measure success based on grants awarded.
- Allow staff to revise the program parameters to match the upcoming Ross Valley Fire grant program if the Fairfax program is unsuccessful.

Staff plans to have the program up and running by early August.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed FY21-22 budget has \$25,000 allocated for such a program in Fund 01-715. However, the MWPA has funds reserved for defensible space inspections/activities for Ross Valley which may be available to reimburse the Town for the awarded grants.