

October 31, 2011

Supporting information Memo from the Rapid City Fire Department for Item #25 of the Legal and Finance meeting Agenda scheduled for November 2, 2011.

The Fire Department is requesting permission to apply for a pre-disaster mitigation grant through FEMA for the purpose of assisting property owners which currently have homes with combustible roof materials, such as wooden shakes, within the Wild land Urban Interface areas of the city. This area is considered the ember zone during a wildfire event and is identified, for the purpose of this project, as West of Mt. Rushmore road. Combustible roofs are highly susceptible to ignition from flying hot embers during a wildfire event. This grant is the only opportunity we have had which will allow us to addresses this issue specifically, and on such a large scale. This project is part of the "Survivable Space Initiative" a concentrated cooperative effort between the RC Fire Department and property owners within high risk fire areas of the city. This effort has successfully resulted in managing of combustible vegetation within high risk neighborhoods which will aid in creating a survivable environment in the event of a wildfire. This Grant is a pass through grant in which the City Manages the federal grant money, and the hard match comes from the each participating property owner directly to the contractors. The cost to the city is administrative time of which reasonable associated costs may be covered by the grant. The application of this grant has been with the assistance of the Black Hills Council of Local Governments office.

Combustible Building Material Replacement Grant Specifics:

- Approximately 30-50 homes will be participating – figure may increase
- Average of \$10,000-\$15,000 per home depending on the structure
- Grant time table will be submittal in April of 2012 with award later that year in the fall
- Work will not begin until late 2012 or early 2013
- Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant through FEMA
 - 75/25 match reimbursement grant
 - Match is hard match-homeowners dollars for individual project
 - Grant requires defensible space in conjunction with roof replacement
 - City will receive grant and administer dollars-city to pay contractor and will be reimbursed 75% of cost from the grant
 - Homeowner pays 25% of cost up front
 - Each home will have set dollar amount specified and guaranteed by contractor in the grant

- The single biggest threat to a home in a wildfire is the roof. If the roof is combustible the home has only a 10-15% percent chance of survival in a wildfire regardless other mitigation efforts on the property.
- Multiple structure ignitions at one time quickly tax resources.
- All homes west of Mt Rushmore Rd in the ember zone of a wildfire on the west side of Rapid City and beyond to Federal and private land in the Black Hills within 2 miles of the city boundary.
- The grant is a good chance to get defensible space implemented at the same time as combustible roof replacement, which is a significant expense and most likely not happen without the grant dollars for many homeowners.
- Combustible roof replacement will dramatically improve the survivability of millions of dollars worth of property in the city which at this point will be considered a loss when a significant fire event occurs.

If you have additional questions or comments please contact the following Rapid City Fire Department Representatives for assistance.

Thank you for your consideration,

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