

**AGENDA COVER MEMO**

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**AGENDA DATE:** March 16, 2010  
**MEMO DATE:** February 19, 2010

**TO:** **LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**FROM:** Department of Public Works / Land Management Division

**PRESENTED BY:** Keir Miller, Associate Planner

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** ORDER NO. 10-3-16-~~XX~~ /IN THE MATTER OF  
AMENDING CHAPTER 4 OF LANE MANUAL TO  
MODIFY PROVISIONS OF THE LANE COUNTY  
FIREWISE INCENTIVES PROGRAM (LM 4.305)

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I. **REQUESTED MOTION** (for the Consent Calendar)

Move to adopt Order No. 10-3-16-~~XX~~.

II. **AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

The Board of Commissioners is being asked to adopt amendments to Chapter 4 of the Lane Manual. The proposed amendments would make minor modifications to the Lane County Firewise Incentives Program to refine and expand available financial incentives for qualifying projects.

III. **BACKGROUND/ IMPLICATIONS OF ACTIONS**

A. **Board Action and Other History**

On December 12, 2008, the Land Management Division (LMD) submitted an application to the Board of Commissioners for Title III funding to establish a County Firewise incentives program.

On February 18, 2009, the Board unanimously approved funding for the proposal under Order No. 09-2-18-5.

On April 15, 2009, the Board adopted official policy language for the program, under Order No. 09-3-31-4. Adopted policies are codified in Lane Manual 4.300 – 4.325.

At the close of the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, LMD was directed to return to the Board on November 4, 2009, and present a report back on the status of the new program.

At the November 4<sup>th</sup> briefing, LMD outlined the accomplishments and challenges encountered in the first six months of program operation. Staff also discussed two possible programmatic changes, which could be made to expand to the incentives offered to residents. Specifically, staff recommended that the available incentive for

defensible space landscaping improvements be increased from a maximum of \$1,000 up to \$2,000 and also that funding be offered to assist residents with the purchase and installation of water catchment and storage tanks. Staff informed the Board that these changes would require amendments to the Lane Manual and that proposed amendments would be forthcoming shortly.

**B. Policy Issues**

It is necessary to monitor and periodically refine program policies and financial incentives offered to residents so that the Firewise program can be effectively administered.

**C. Board Goals**

The County's Strategic Objective D5 is to: *Develop timber revenue strategies and actions to ensure continuation of County payments from the federal government under public law 106.393.*

Efficient use of Title III funds on worthy and qualifying projects will assist in future SRS renewal efforts. Establishing the proper types of financial incentives that County residents may use to protect their homes from wildfires will go a long way in ensuring that Objective D5 is being satisfied.

Additionally, the 2008-2010 Strategic Goal No.1 is to: Develop Lane County's economic engine [by] grow[ing] local businesses. The landscaping and construction incentives offered through this program (and the Lane Manual language that guides their administration) have been developed in consultation with local area contractors and are specifically designed to stimulate growth in the local landscaping and construction industries – and thus, address the 2008-2010 Strategic Goal No.1.

**D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations**

No adjustments to the Firewise Program budget are being proposed. The recommended Lane Manual amendments will simply enable the County to offer a wider spectrum of possible incentives to better address the on-the-ground fire protection needs of residents. Therefore, no foreseeable financial or resource implications are anticipated at this time.

**E. Analysis**

Currently, financial incentives are offered to partially or wholly reimburse the costs that rural home owners incur for the following Firewise-related improvements:

- Replacement of a wood shake roof with a noncombustible roof - 80% of construction cost up to \$4,000, maximum;
- Installation of fire resistant exterior windows and skylights made from tempered glass, multi layered glazed panels or glass block - 80% of construction cost up to \$1,500, maximum;
- Installation of non-combustible exterior doors - \$300, maximum;
- Installation of spark arrestors on chimneys and barbecues - \$100, maximum;
- Installation of mesh protection on exterior ventilation or deck openings that will prevent the entry of firebrands - \$100, maximum;

- Landscaping improvements that will create a defensible space around habitable structures. Under this category, funding is available for brush removal, tree pruning, chipping and the planting of approved fire-resistant plants within a 30' buffer around homes - \$1,000, maximum;
- Installation of an irrigation system to serve the 30' defensible space buffer established around residences - 25% of installation and system costs up to \$500.

It appears that the current funding levels offered for structural improvements are sufficient to incentivize residents to take action. However, there have been some instances where the \$1,000 amount offered for landscaping improvements does not go very far in reducing hazardous fuels around properties that are heavily overgrown. Staff recommends that this amount be increased up to a maximum of \$2,000.

Additionally, several program participants have expressed an interest in obtaining financial assistance to help purchase a water supply tank. The program currently offers funding for the installation of an irrigation system to help maintain a green defensible space but no funding is available to address the problem of water availability. From a wildfire protection standpoint, funding rainwater catchment systems and storage tanks appears logical and would be a justifiable expenditure of Firewise funding.

After reviewing costs and technical specifications on various water catchment system options including tanks, pumps, downspout filters and related peripherals, staff recommends offering an incentive that would cover 80% of materials and installation costs up to a maximum of \$2,500.

#### **IV. ACTION**

##### **A. Alternatives/Options**

**Option 1:** Adopt Order Number No. 10-3-16-~~XX~~. This option would modify provisions of Lane Manual to increase the maximum incentive available for Firewise-related landscaping improvements to \$2,000 and would also add an incentive option for the installation of a water catchment and storage tank system.

**Option 2:** Do not adopt the Order and direct staff to revise the proposed amendments to Lane Manual.

##### **B. Recommendation**

Staff recommends Option 1.

##### **C. Follow Up/Next Steps**

Following adoption, the proposed amendments will take effect and the expanded incentive opportunities will be become available to residents during the next Firewise grant application cycle.

#### **V. ATTACHMENTS**

A - Order No. 10-3-16-~~XX~~

Exhibit 1 to Attachment A - Proposed Amendments to Lane Manual 4.305

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO. 10-3-16- \_\_\_\_\_

IN THE MATTER OF AMENDING CHAPTER 4 OF  
LANE MANUAL TO MODIFY PROVISIONS OF  
THE LANE COUNTY FIREWISE INCENTIVES  
PROGRAM (LM 4.305)

The Board of County Commissioners of Lane County orders as follows:

Lane Manual Chapter 4 is hereby amended by removing and substituting the following pages:

**REMOVE THESE PAGES**

4.305

as located on pages 4-11 through 4-13  
(a total of 3 pages)

**INSERT THESE PAGES**

4.305

as located on pages 4-11 through 4-13  
(a total of 3 pages)

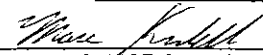
Said pages are attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The purpose of these substitutions is to modify provisions of the Lane County Firewise Incentives Program. (LM 4.305)

Adopted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date 2-19-10 Lane County



OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

development strategic investment category. *(Revised by Order No. 01-2-21-2; Effective 5.1.02; 05-11-30-3, 11.30.05)*

## COMPUTER AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

### 4.200 Purpose.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the departments and employees in the prudent use and management of the computer resources, communication resources, and information technology of Lane County. *(Revised by Order No. 01-3-14-4; Effective 3.14.01; 05-11-2-1, 11.2.05)*

### 4.220 Policy.

Computer resources, communication resources, and information technology are provided and shall be used in the furtherance of County business. The County Administrator shall adopt administrative procedures implementing this policy, including sanctions for policy violation. Those procedures may include minor and incidental personal use, which for the limited purpose of compliance with the state ethics rules is considered part of the compensation package for County officers and employees. The County Administrator is authorized to establish a monthly stipend in lieu of an assigned communication device. *(Revised by Order No. 01-3-14-4, Effective 3.14.01; 05-11-2-1, 11.2.05)*

## FIREWISE INCENTIVES PROGRAM

### 4.300 Purpose.

The purpose of this voluntary program is to institute specific incentives, including building permit fee waivers and grant funding opportunities, for targeted residential construction and landscaping improvements that qualify under Title III, Section 601 of Public Law 110-343 - The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. These provisions establish and define allowable incentives, and the authority of county staff to conduct fire safety property assessments to determine program eligibility and to confirm that requirements of the program have been satisfied. Participation in this program shall be voluntary. *(Revised by Order No. 09-3-31-4, 4.15.09)*

### 4.305 Financial Incentives.

In an effort to reduce the catastrophic loss of life, property and natural resources from a wildland urban interface disaster Lane County promotes home design, construction, landscaping and maintenance activities that follow the national Firewise Communities program guidelines. To this end, the following incentives are available to qualifying county homeowners within Lane County and outside of the Urban Growth Boundary of an incorporated city, to the extent consistent with LM 4.310:

(1) Building Permit Fee Waivers. Building permit fees may be waived for property owners and supplanted with Title III funds for those qualifying improvements listed under LM 4.305(2) that are made to lawfully established dwellings and that meet applicable standards found in the 2009 International Urban-Wildland Interface Code. These waivers shall cover 100% of building permit fees, when permits are required for said improvements, up to a maximum amount of \$2,500. However, no more than 20% of the total annual Title III incentive funding available each fiscal year shall be applied towards fee waivers. Fees for planning actions, septic permits, and other approvals separate from the building permit are not covered by this waiver. The county may require a deposit for these permits not to exceed the lesser of either 25% of the permit fee, or

\$1,000. The purpose of such deposits is to ensure that applicants bring projects to a satisfactory conclusion while their eligible funds are being held in abeyance from other projects. If a project is not completed in a timely manner this deposit will be retained only to the extent necessary to compensate Lane County for costs incurred in review of the project. Deposits will be refunded in full upon the completion of all work required on the project, if done within 1 year of eligibility being determined and approved.

(2) Building Improvement Incentives. Financial incentives to pay licensed contractors and landscapers are available to eligible County homeowners who satisfactorily complete the following types of building improvements:

Improvement	Available Financial Incentive
(a) Roof Covering (Shake to approved Class A non-combustible roof covering or Class B roof assembly).	80% of construction cost up to \$4,000 maximum, if a defensible space exists or is developed, consistent with (3)(a), below.
(b) Noncombustible Exterior Siding	80% of construction cost up to \$4,000 maximum, if a defensible space exists or is developed, consistent with (3)(a), below.
(c) Fire Resistant Glazing for Windows, Skylights and Other Exterior Glass Applications.	80% of construction cost up to \$1,500 maximum, if a defensible space exists or is developed, consistent with (3)(a), below.
(d) Exterior Doors.	80% of construction cost up to \$300 maximum, if a defensible space exists or is developed, consistent with (3)(a), below.
(e) Spark Arrestor Installation.	\$100
(f) Vent Protection.	\$100

(3) Landscaping Improvements. Financial incentives to complete the following types of landscaping improvements are available as follows:

Improvement	Available Financial Incentive
(a) Defensible Space Development.	\$500 (base) and up to \$2,000 when warranted by specific site conditions.
(b) Driveway Access.	\$200 when warranted by site conditions and performed in conjunction with (3)(a), above.
(c) Fire Resistant Plants & Hardscaping.	\$300, maximum, in conjunction with (3)(a), above.
(d) Defensible Space Irrigation System.	25% of installation and system costs up to \$500, in conjunction with (3)(a), above.
(e) Water-Catchment Storage Tanks Supplying Water to a Defensible Space Irrigation System (maximum individual tank size not to exceed 5,000 gallons).	80% of installation and equipment costs up to \$2,500 when performed in conjunction with (3)(a) and (3)(d), above.

(4) Applicants pursuing incentives provided for in LM 4.305 (1)-(3) must address specific qualifying standards and criteria as the Public Works Director may reasonably require. These standards and criteria are set forth on the Lane County Firewise

Incentives Grant Application form. This application must be completed by the applicant or his or her authorized agent and submitted to the Land Management Division prior to the start of any project where county Firewise Incentive Program funds will be sought.

(5) No person, entity, or affiliation shall be eligible for Firewise financial incentives for more than 2 residences annually. *(Revised by Order No. 09-3-31-4, 4.15.09)*

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**Bold** indicates material being added  
Strikethrough indicates material being deleted  
4.305 Lane Manual

**LEGISLATIVE  
FORMAT**  
4.305

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