



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: TIM ROBINSON, SERGEANT
TOM WICKMAN, CHIEF OF POLICE
RE: TAKE HOME VEHICLES – BUDGET REQUEST
DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2023

Summary and Background: During the 2024 budget process, staff presented a request to purchase five take-home vehicles for the Police Department to Town Council. This request was included in the 5-year Capital Plan. Council directed staff to include the program numbers in the 2024 budget, but to return to Council for further discussion and authorization for such purchase.

There are a number of reasons for each officer to have a take-home marked vehicle:

- First and foremost, the Town must remain competitive to attract new officers (recruits). In terms of a recruiting advantage, this program will help the Town recruit and retain officers. Most Sheriff Departments, if not all, have take-home vehicles. The Town currently has four recruits in the police academy, and all four have been heavily recruited by other agencies in our County over the past few months while in training.
- Having a take home vehicle supports other agencies (quick response) as they too have staff shortages, i.e. Frisco will be able to assist as the need presents itself. In the last few months, a number of officers have assisted other agencies on their way into work. One of our officers began to take calls after passing through the Eisenhower tunnel during our standoff in the Safeway parking lot. Their own assigned vehicle allows them to be street ready as there is no transfer of equipment, as well taking pride (cleaner, neater) in their own vehicle.
- Additionally, marked take-home vehicles provide increased officer presence throughout the County while officers are traveling to and from Frisco.

Staff request five vehicles for the calendar year 2024, and four additional vehicles for 2025. Staff welcome feedback and questions pertaining to this program and this request during the November 14th work session.

Analysis: Take-home vehicles are one additional recruitment and retention tool for keeping Frisco competitive and securing a full staff. Chief Wickman recently spoke to Chief Daley of the Avon Police Department as well as the Chief of the Tacoma (WA) Police Department, and they both spoke of the fact that they have been able to retain more officers due to a similar take-home vehicle program. In addition, the Summit County Sheriff's Department has always had a take home car program.

Staff continue to prioritize recruitment and retention of Police Officers in Frisco. Other programs currently in place include:

- Increasing pay to match neighboring municipalities. Police and Human Resources staff regularly review wages across the County, and most recently increased salaries in the Frisco Step Program for Police Officers, Detectives and Sergeants to remain competitive with our neighbors. To note, the Summit County Sheriff's Department just again raised its starting salary for academy cadets to \$79,467, which is \$10,080 higher than our recent increase to \$69,387.
- Implementing a bonus program (\$4,000) upon hire and after completion of training (\$4,000).
- Adding a five-year bonus program of \$25,000. Since 2019, the average length of employment as a Frisco Police Officer is 2.3 years. A five-year bonus program is designed to incentivize officers to stay for a period of at least five years.
- Training. All recruits go through a rigorous training program after they complete the academy. Training is ongoing throughout their employment and prepares officers for the variety of incidents and situations they encounter. Chief Wickman is committed to ongoing training and holding all officers to the highest level of professionalism. Officers who train recruits also earn an additional \$200/week for such training.
- Additional Town of Frisco programs include a referral bonus, housing referral bonus, down payment assistance on home purchases, rental options, and a competitive health insurance and leave package.

Staff also continue to look for opportunities to house more officers in Frisco through our current and future housing projects and programs.

As mentioned above, the take-home vehicle program is one additional program designed to recruit and retain officers in Frisco. A copy of the draft policy for this program was provided to Council before and is included as Attachment 1 to this document.

Financial Impact: Five take-home vehicles are included in the 2024 capital budget (vehicle and equipment replacement) for a total of \$428,500. This equates to \$85,700 per vehicle. One of these vehicle requests is part of the 10-year replacement schedule, while four of these vehicles are a new ask for 2024. The total vehicle and equipment replacement budget for 2024 is \$705,500. The 2024 budget has accounted for these purchases.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: The Town of Frisco is committed to providing timely and innovative core services with efficiency, excellent customer service, and professionalism. Two of the pillars of the July 2023 updated Town of Frisco Strategic Plan are "providing essential public safety services" and "attracting and retaining high-performing personnel." A take-home vehicle program is designed to enhance essential public safety services and to recruit and retain professional level staff.

Environmental Sustainability: It is a goal for the Frisco Police Department to have officers, detectives and sergeants who live and work in Frisco or other areas of Summit County. Due to a variety of circumstances, this is not always a reality and many staff travel to and from work from outside of Summit County. With a take-home vehicle program, staff will be driving vehicles that are well maintained and serviced regularly by the Town's professional fleet staff. Town staff will also be responsible for procuring such vehicles and continuing to support the Town's move towards electrifying vehicles. While these five vehicles are not anticipated to be all-electric in 2024, staff know that police vehicles are continuing to be engineered for patrol and will continue to research them for future purchases to meet our operational needs and our Town goals.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends implementing a take-home vehicle program.

Reviews and Approvals:

- Leslie Edwards, Finance Director
- Diane McBride, Assistant Town Manager
- Tom Fisher, Town Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Draft Take Home Vehicle Policy