



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Raymond Riordan

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
STUDY SESSION**

DATE: March 16, 2023

Approved

Date

3/17/2023

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

This Study Session will provide an overview on:

- Recent Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations,
- The role of the elected officials during an emergency,
- Purpose of the Disaster District Office (DDO),
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and
- EOC functions.

The Study Session will also include a discussion-based, facilitated tabletop exercise to demonstrate the City's overall emergency management efforts by discussing some of its emergency plans, how it coordinates response action, and how it communicates with the elected officials, the public, and partner response agencies.

By the end of this Study Session, the Mayor and City Council will be engaged in discussions on:

- Actions to take during an emergency,
- How the EOC functions in a disaster and communicates with elected officials, and
- The updated plans and procedures that guide our emergency response.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) supports the City Manager, who is the City's Director of Emergency Services, in developing, maintaining, and managing the City's emergency management capabilities, including the City's primary and alternate EOCs, emergency communications, and all other aspects and systems used during an emergency or disaster in the City of San José.

In 2017, OEM was transferred from the Fire Department to the City Manager's Office. Since then, the EOC has been activated 14 times, for a total of over 795 days. A few activations include:

- 2020-2022 COVID-19 Pandemic: 730 days
- 2020 SCU Lightening Complex Fire: 16 days
- 2020 George Floyd Protests: 2 days
- 2021 Flood Watch: 1 day
- 2021 Gas Leaks: 2 days
- 2022 Home Depot Fire: 1 day
- 2022-2023 Winter Storms and Atmospheric Rivers: 22 days

During the COVID-19 pandemic the EOC was activated for two years, for a total of 730 days. This was a unique activation in that the EOC was activated for a longer period of time compared to most emergency responses. During this activation, the City learned to operate virtually in order to maintain continuity of government operations and engagement with the community. After each emergency an After-Action Report was completed that identified areas of excellence and area for improvement. The COVID-19 After-Action Report will be presented to the City Council on March 21, 2023.

ANALYSIS

A Situation Manual accompanies this memorandum to City Council. The format and flow of the Study Session will follow the Department of Homeland Security's Exercise and Evaluation Program requirements. The Study Session will take place in at City Hall Wing Rooms 118-120 to allow for arranging the tables and chairs to demonstrate the relationship between the EOC, Department Operations Centers, DDOs, shelter and other field activities, and public information and liaison functions. The Situation Manual includes instructions, scenario information, and key questions designed to stimulate discussion on response issues, communication, public information, and operations. The facilitated session will allow for structured questions and informal dialogue. The Study Session will conclude with discussion on the progress in the citywide emergency management program and future considerations, as the City becomes "quake ready".

ROLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIALS

One of the outcomes of the March 23, 2023, City Council Study Session on Emergency Management is to review the role of elected officials. The tabletop exercise activities will review elected official actions before, during, and after an emergency that could directly influence the behavior, readiness, and resiliency of residents, businesses, and City employees, and directly impact the City's ability to protect lives, property, and the environment. From setting policy for emergency management, homeland security, and continuity programs within the City to resourcing these programs to protect their constituents, the City's elected officials create and

build the capability and capacity to enable the City to effectively prepare for, mitigate against, prevent, respond to, and recover from all threats and hazards impacting the City.

More than any other position within the City, the City's elected officials play a crucial role in strengthening the resilience of their constituents, the City's residents, and businesses. In terms of emergencies, the concept of resilience is the "ability of individuals, communities, organizations and [governments] to adapt to and recover from hazards, shocks, or stresses without compromising long-term prospects for development" (U.N. Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2009). The City's elected officials maintain and nurture a direct connection with the residents and businesses within the City and can use that relationship to encourage resiliency at all levels. Encouraging residents to become and stay prepared for an emergency; providing information to residents before, during, and after an emergency; and strengthening emergency procedures for their communities are critical tasks for the City's elected officials.

During an emergency, the City Manager, or designee, as the Director of Emergency Services, is responsible for carrying out the policy established by the Mayor and City Council. The City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) provides that policy direction and enables the City to coordinate many disparate elements towards pre-agreed strategic goals. The Mayor and City Council serve as primary conduits between the government and the public both during and after the emergency.

Each member of the City Council provides a direct link to their constituents through the establishment of their DDOs in their respective districts, when needed. DDOs serve as the focal point for coordinating aid to each Council District and enable the City Council to focus on local district needs and provide information to the City EOC regarding unmet and urgent needs within their district.

The City Council may also hold public meetings to conduct the business relevant to response and recovery from the disaster (for example, the adoption of ordinances) and to hear from and communicate with the public.

Before, during, and after an emergency, specific responsibilities of the City Council include, but are not limited to:

- Maintain and support continuity of government operations and essential services.
- Participate in required training as required by state and federal law.
- Review requirements for special legislation and development of policy.
- Serve as the liaison with the public and community organizations.
- Maintain coordinated communication to the public as guided by the EOC City Council Liaison and Emergency Public Information Officer.
- Receive regular updates and briefings from the Director of Emergency Services (City Manager), through the EOC City Council Liaison.
- Review and approve the Proclamation of Local Emergency.
- Establish and manage DDOs in each Council District, as needed.
- Serve as a liaison with other city, county, state and/or federal government representatives.

- Visit impacted areas, shelters, and other incident facilities to reassure constituents and identify areas of concern or need.
- Coordinate with the City EOC regarding unmet and urgent needs within the Council Districts.
- Support and accompany visits by state and federal officials to impacted areas, shelters, and other incident facilities.
- Conduct public meetings to determine public needs and identify current or future City actions related to the emergency.
- Consider and approve both short- and long-term recovery recommendations as developed by City staff.

DDOs

OEM staff have been meeting with the staff of each City Councilmember to discuss the purpose and activities that may evolve in a DDO. Conversations have included selection of the best site to facilitate the elected officials' responsibilities and operational goals and priorities. The DDO allows constituents to have ready access to the Councilmember and staff during an emergency, especially when transportation routes or normal working conditions are not possible, for receiving emergency public information, identifying urgent humanitarian needs, and coordinating vital services to their community.

The functions of the DDO helps coordinate:

1. Government assistance in large, complex emergencies.
2. Communication to their constituents as early and often with accurate and current information.
3. Support for their constituents, gather information, and identify unmet needs.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

OEM will continue to provide staff training through the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Program and to work with all city departments in updating and/or developing emergency plans and procedures. The lead staff in each area of work will be responsible for managing the coordination of the necessary work and bringing relevant updates or requests for direction back to Council Committee or the full City Council as appropriate.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Office, City Manager's Office of Communications, City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs, City Manager's Office of Emergency Management, City Manager's Office of Employee Relations, and the departments of Environmental Services, Finance, Fire, Housing,

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

March 16, 2023

Subject: City Council Study Session on Emergency Management

Page 5

Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Police, Public Works, and Transportation.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the March 23, 2023 City Council Study Session.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-010, City Organizational and Administrative Activities resulting in no change to the physical environment.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/

RAYMOND RIORDAN

Director, Office of Emergency Management

For questions, please contact Raymond Riordan, Director of the Office of Emergency Management at (408) 794-7050.

ATTACHMENT

City Council Study Session on Emergency Management, Tabletop Exercise, Situation Manual, March 23, 2023