



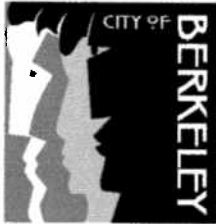
Office of the City Manager

TO BE DELIVERED AGENDA MATERIAL

Meeting Date: December 6, 2005 Work Session
Item Number: 1a
Item Description: Disaster Preparedness Update and Work Plan

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "PLU", written above a horizontal line.

City Manager Signature



Office of the City Manager

WORK SESSION
December 6, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From:  Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Debra Pryor, Fire Chief, Berkeley Fire Department

Subject: Disaster Preparedness Update and Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

This overview of the City's comprehensive efforts to reduce risk and to better prepare for disasters describes safety actions taken to date to ensure community safety; provides background information on staff training and response preparations; and examines community preparedness initiatives. This report also provides an update on the City's Disaster Preparedness Program and Work Plan for the next twelve months.

SUMMARY

The Office of Emergency Services has developed a disaster preparedness plan that focuses on mitigation, prevention, and preparedness. The plan focuses on mitigation through support of retrofit programs; prevention through community education; and preparedness through development of neighborhood organizations, allied agencies, and other community groups. The work plan also places emphasis on training for City staff and citizens. Staff continues to research available grants to help support disaster preparedness needs.

CURRENT SITUATION AND EFFECTS

The hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region prompted the City Council to ask for an update on the state of Berkeley's readiness for disasters. The media scenes of dead, injured and stranded people, along with the catastrophic property damage in Louisiana and its neighboring states, sparked political outrage and social concern about government's capacity to adequately address the needs of our community after a natural disaster. In the aftermath of the storms, local, state and federal government officials were not able to respond effectively to provide basic measures of community protection and relief. These events have badly shaken people's confidence in their elected and appointed officials to manage the consequences of natural disasters.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita resulted in tremendous damage to the built environment, which led to evacuees migrating to communities throughout the country, including Berkeley. The hurricanes and subsequent damage also raised awareness about the need for disaster preparedness, resulting in an increased demand for Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) classes and public evaluation of Berkeley's disaster response capability. Along with an examination of public agency readiness, we are also reviewing how best to strengthen our community outreach and preparedness efforts.

BACKGROUND

Pre-Disaster Prevention Efforts

In the last fifteen years, California has experienced numerous federally declared disasters, including the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the 1991 Oakland Berkeley Hills firestorm, and the 1994 Northridge earthquake, and has learned that preventive action is the most effective way to ensure community safety. California has a framework of protective policies, legislation and functional practices to provide a safety net to protect people and minimize property damage in substantial natural disasters, including:

- the 1950 Master Mutual Aid Agreement;
- California's model Incident Command System (and its federal off-shoot, the National Incident Management System);
- the Standardized Emergency Management System (1992);
- the Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone legislation; and
- the State Hazards Mapping Act (1990).

Taken together, these laws provide a map for local government to use when responding to disasters and identifying natural hazards. The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), sponsored in 1992 by Berkeley's legislators, Senator Petris and Assemblymember Bates, directed all state and local agencies to use the same operational system when responding to disasters. This legislation was the prototype for the new federal standardized response system.

Further, the state has instituted stringent building codes since the early 20th century. The first state code was adopted in 1928; and, Berkeley adopted its own local building code in advance of that in 1906. Though Californians take this legislative direction and ensuing regulatory procedures for granted, the state building code is a significant tool in providing guidance for a robust built environment. Such regulations and enforcement procedures are not standard practice in many disaster-prone areas in the United States.

California law also mandates that cities adopt a General Plan that includes a seismic safety and disaster preparedness element. The specialized plan elements allow cities to define local policies and actions that are aimed to reduce risk from natural hazards. Berkeley's General Plan has the following goal:

“Make Berkeley a disaster-resistant community that can survive, recover from and thrive after a disaster. We see the way to making this a reality by identifying and reducing vulnerabilities; improving emergency response and preparation; and by using disaster-resistant land use planning.”

The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that cities develop a comprehensive risk reduction strategy; Berkeley was the first California city to comply with that requirement by adopting its plan in July 2004.

Our community has the highest *per capita* investment in risk reduction in California. Since 1989, Berkeley has invested in community sustainability on many fronts. The City Council, prompted by then-Councilmember Alan Goldfarb, established an Office of Emergency Services in July, 1989 and convened the commission that later became the Disaster Council. This leadership continued and after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1991 East Bay Hills fire, Berkeley acted to make risk reduction and community sustainability a priority.

From 1992 to 2000, Berkeley voters approved six special taxes (with a super-majority approval rate for each measure) totaling \$386 million. These taxes generated revenue for the City and school district to fund seismic and fire upgrades for public buildings; to develop a contingency water supply system for firefighting purposes; and to construct essential service facilities such as the Tsukamoto Public Safety Building and the City's alternate emergency operations center. Every public school, fire station and other municipal buildings is now more seismically resistant, including Berkeley's Central Library and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Center Building. Local City Council members and the Board of Education made community safety a priority by seeking voter approval of the funding measures and bringing attention to the necessity of taking local action to prevent future potential damage.

Berkeley has also developed programs to reduce risk in privately owned buildings. In the 1990s, the Berkeley City Council proposed innovative approaches to increasing safety that proved successful without much fanfare. Using fiscal, technical and administrative incentives for private sector retrofit, many building and home owners have retrofitted their buildings. The retrofit rate in the City's residential building stock is approaching 70% (of over 23,000 units) of single-family homes. Popular programs include the City's rebate of a portion of the property transfer tax and (until this year) waiver of permit fees for seismic improvements in homes and some eligible unreinforced masonry buildings. Programs were developed to fund home upgrades for eligible low-income seniors, disabled and other low-income residents. The City library maintains a tool-lending library where community members can borrow the tools needed to retrofit homes and confer with knowledgeable staff members. A loan program is available to eligible residents to assist in funding safety upgrades. All told, these programs contribute annually in municipal revenue to improve community safety in privately owned buildings. Here in Berkeley, we have seen that community safety and sustainability is a balanced interaction of public and private sector partnership. In 2005, the Council adopted a new ordinance to address the safety issues in soft-story apartment buildings, and in early 2006 will consider updated retrofit standards for residential buildings.

Current Efforts

The Berkeley Fire Department, Fire Prevention and Office of Emergency Services Division, conducted an evaluation of the City's emergency preparedness program in the past year. The primary outcome of the evaluation was to develop a work plan to improve disaster preparedness and response. Staff focuses the work plan to address Employee Disaster Response Training, Community Disaster Preparedness, Local and Regional Coordination, and will coordinate interdepartmental efforts on hazard mitigation and recovery. This work plan was developed with the input from the Disaster Council, Fire Commission and other city departments.

Employee Disaster Response Training

The work plan proposes to provide training for the Mayor and Council in disaster operations, with an opportunity to study the process of how different policy decisions are made during disasters. This training will prepare the Mayor and Council for their defined responsibilities, should the city have a disaster or large-scale incident. The Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) defines the roles for the elected and appointed officials and are the touchstone for continuity of government in a regional disaster. Unlike the southern Gulf States, California does have a highly developed and frequently tested system for responding to disasters.

Training for City staff is a must. All local government staff are designated Disaster Service Workers, according to state law. Consequently, it is critical that we provide adequate training for staff to know their disaster response responsibilities and have learning opportunities to deepen that knowledge. Keeping training and disaster exercises on the organization's larger schedule is a challenge when months of advance planning and practice must be maintained.

Due to staff changes, new Emergency Operations Center Section Chiefs and Unit Leaders were appointed. Several of the section chiefs or unit leaders have not had formal training in incident command system (ICS) or disaster response. The work plan proposes to provide documented training in ICS and disaster response. Many employees have not attended a disaster response class in over two years. Through the work plan process, staff will provide refresher training in disaster operations or incident command systems for EOC assigned staff members every two years.

Emergency Operations Center exercises provide an opportunity for senior staff members to practice managing a disaster. Last month city staff participated in the Golden Guardian exercise, a regional disaster drill. The results of the exercise showed that staff has improved their ability to work in a coordinated fashion and develop incident action plans; areas that often test an organization's capacity to manage an on-going disaster response effort. The work plan calls for city staff to participate in an expanded exercise to evaluate long-term disaster operations. This exercise is scheduled for April 18, 2006 during the week of the commemoration events for the 100th anniversary of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

Community Disaster Preparedness

The Katrina aftermath heightened awareness for disaster preparedness. As a result, the Office of Emergency Services put on twenty-seven disaster preparedness talks or classes and gave presentations to 973 Berkeley citizens or workers in three months. On average, OES normally gives three classes and teaches 75 people on an annual basis. OES will continue to schedule classes to be able to meet the continuing demand.

A meeting with Easy Does It was arranged to address special needs of the disabled community during disasters. This local non-profit agency handles the assistance programs the City funds through a special tax that provides resources for the disabled community. Easy Does It is developing a list for the Office of Emergency Services of clients who have special health equipment needs, ventilators or oxygen tanks.

The list will be filed in the Emergency Operations Center for use during disaster operations. The Office of Emergency Services also produced disaster preparedness books in Braille this year to accommodate

the needs of visually impaired persons attending our disaster preparedness class, and is offering afternoon classes for those who are unable to make a morning class.

In order to provide more disaster preparedness talks and to reach the underrepresented, OES will be hosting a Train-the-Trainer program in January 2006. This program will train interested persons to provide disaster preparedness talks to their congregations, service clubs, business groups, or neighborhood associations. In addition to this effort, OES plans to coordinate an assertive community project to better establish neighborhood preparedness groups. We hope to have local services clubs and other like groups join in on a coordinated outreach and education effort. It would be a fitting complement to the CERT classes and a way to grow community capacity for disaster response.

OES staff will meet with the Greek fraternity and sorority council to address disaster preparedness and encourage their organizations to be prepared while living in Berkeley. Also, Berkeley Fire Department is working with five high school interns to assist with teaching disaster preparedness to their fellow students and to assist with inventory of the disaster caches at the different schools.

In order to provide information to new Berkeley homeowners, staff will produce a "Welcome to Berkeley" information packet. This packet will provide information on disaster preparedness, fire safety information, and phone numbers for city services. We plan to work with the Board of Realtors to assist with delivery of the informational packet to the new homeowners.

One of most difficult challenges to enhance our response plan is the care and sheltering of pets. The city does not have enough shelter space to accommodate evacuees and pets. Sheltering pets and evacuees together will lead to security and health issues. We plan to work with community leaders and staff at the Animal Services Division to better map out post-disaster issues and develop a plan to address what we can.

Plans to establish a second neighborhood disaster cache are ongoing. Staff is working to identify different neighborhood groups, which have completed the CERT training classes. The first round of disaster caches required neighborhood groups to complete the CERT training in order to be eligible to receive the caches. We found this program to be highly successful, as it engaged neighborhood groups that were motivated to be disaster-ready and was an incentive for more partnership with the community. This program was funded by money allocated from the Measure Q program (the special tax approved by the voters in 2000 for fire safety equipment and supplies).

The Office of Emergency Services has worked closely with the Disaster Council and Fire Commission to obtain input and ideas to improve disaster preparedness and response. The Disaster Council and Fire Commission have submitted their priorities in their December 6, 2005 report. Many of their suggestions have been incorporated into the work plan.

Local and Regional Coordination

The City of Berkeley continues to work with other local jurisdictions and agencies in order to practice disaster response and coordination. The City of Albany has been invited to participate in a disaster drill scheduled for April 2006. Other participating agencies include Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Bayer Healthcare, U.C. Berkeley, and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. These agencies will design a drill to focus on long-term operations. We anticipate, as well, interjurisdictional briefings for

senior officials before the April event to ensure clearly defined responsibilities among all the agencies and institutions. Closer coordination and resource sharing with Alameda County is another area that warrants discussion.

Our staff plans to improve the coordination among the city, district and campus in this coming year. The disaster cache program that we partnered on with the school district was a positive accomplishment. We hope to continue with the development of the Care and Shelter Plan, which requires local and regional coordination. The City of Berkeley is finalizing its Care and Shelter Plan with U.C. Berkeley, Berkeley Unified School District, and the American Red Cross. To better achieve effective preparedness efforts with other agencies and institutions, we must have a specified understanding about disaster situation decision-making and lines of authority. To avoid replicating continuity of governance and operational authority issues seen in the Katrina disaster, we hope to convene a briefing with senior officials from our various neighbor/partner entities early next year to fully explore and clarify these matters.

The Office of Emergency Services is exploring the possibility of establishing Mutual Aid Support Teams for use at a requesting agency's emergency operation center. The concept of a team that can go in to another jurisdiction to support continued government operations, apart from the first response needs, is an area that has typically not been addressed in recent disasters.

Response

Response capabilities can be improved through building backup communications, updating the EOC and department response plans, as well as completing pre-disaster agreements with the American Red Cross.

Staff identified the need for satellite phones and Blackberry Nextel portable radios and cell phones as potential back-up communication devices should the City's radio systems fail. Bayer HealthCare recently announced that it is making a contribution to the City for various program needs; a portion of that money will be used to purchase six satellite phones.

The City uses an emergency notification system to keep people informed during disasters. 1610 AM is Berkeley's emergency radio station. The Berkeley Emergency Notification System (BENS) is a telephone notification system that can contact residents and businesses through an automatic message service center in the event of an emergency.

Communications between police agencies in Alameda County is a regional issue. Patrol officers in the field from Berkeley and U.C. Berkeley are unable to communicate with each other, because they operate on different radio bands. Police agencies in Alameda and Contra Costa County are exploring the possibility of a Homeland Security grant to pay for communication upgrades that will allow police agencies to communicate on a common frequency.

All departments have been requested to update their disaster response plans to address staging areas for workers and standard operating procedures when normal communications links fail. Staff has been updating the Emergency Operation Center's response plan and will work on updating the City's Multi-Hazard Function Plan.

Recovery

Lessons learned from Katrina and the World Trade Center attacks identified recovery teams as an essential component for recovery of business and government functions. Staff will retain recovery specialists and establish back-up recovery teams to assist our local efforts in a disaster. Staff plans to work with the business community to teach them how to backup data to support recovery operations; many business leaders are eager to get involved in damage prevention and disaster preparedness programs.

The City Finance Department has established procedures and protocols to document expenditures accrued during disaster operations. These procedures will make it easier to submit documentation for FEMA reimbursement.

Health and Human Service Programs

The Public Health Preparedness and Bioterrorism Response Program (PHP) is a part of the citywide Emergency Response Plan. It has been funded by the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) since July 2002. The past three-year grant cycle focused on developing the local public health infrastructure to prepare for and respond to bioterrorism and other public health emergencies. The next five-year cycle will focus on regional collaboration of emergency response efforts and the demonstration of our local health jurisdiction's ability to respond to a public health emergency based on the results of drills, exercises and actual response efforts.

Major accomplishments over the last three years include:

- Preparedness planning and a public health readiness assessment;
- Enhanced epidemiology and surveillance;
- Upgrading information technology and participating in the state Health Alert Network;
- Development of a Public Health Emergency Response Plan including supplements on Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication, Pandemic Influenza Response, Smallpox Response and the Strategic National Stockpile;
- Public Health staff training in Emergency Preparedness and Response;
- Development of a public health information line and phone tree.

In the next five years, through continued funding from the Center for Disease Control and CDHS, we will focus on Pandemic Influenza planning, mass prophylaxis planning for an infectious disease outbreak, and regional collaboration. The challenge is to continue this work with decreased funding. Like other jurisdictions across the state, the Berkeley Public Health Division received a 20 per cent reduction from last year's funding. Based on current program staffing, Public Health will need to prioritize preparedness activities as set forth in the Cooperative Agreement for FY 2005-2006.

Needs

Funding remains a critical need in order to accomplish sustainable work plans and training. Staff will work on developing proposals for adequate disaster preparedness program funding. Adjustments in preparedness funding for OES is being considered to help provide ongoing employee and community disaster response training as well as CERT presentations.

Disaster communications devices and notification programs are needed to maintain communications with the public and allied agencies, and to support operations. Staff is currently evaluating BlackBerry devices and satellites phones as an option to maintain emergency communications in the event that landline and cell phones become unavailable.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Review the disaster preparedness program every two years, along with the Safety Element and Mitigation Plan.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Staff is developing a long-term work plan along with accompanying funding needs. Identified needs include the following:

One-Time Costs

Second Distribution of 8 Neighborhood Disaster Caches	\$115,000
Community Outreach and Education	40,000
BlackBerry Communication Software	20,000
EOC and Joint Information Center Equipment	12,000
CERT Disaster Preparedness Handbook – 1,000 copies	<u>7,000</u>
	194,000

Recurring Costs

OES Staff – Civilian Analyst	\$100,000
First Call – Berkeley Emergency Notification System	15,000
Annual Training for Employees	20,000
Recovery Retainers	10,000
Satellite Phone Subscriptions	<u>4,200</u>
	149,200

These costs will be considered at the mid-year Budget review on February 7, 2006.

CONTACT PERSONS

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