



Councilmember Ben Bartlett
City of Berkeley, District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR
November 28, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett

Subject: Referral to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission and the City Manager: Five Year Plan for Expanded Disaster Preparedness Services

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission and the City Manager's office to explore developing a five year plan for expanded disaster preparedness services.

Consider the following items:

1. Equity and Accountability

Improve the accountability and equity of disaster programs in the City of Berkeley so that a program will only be considered successful if it serves the whole community equitably. Consider these improvements:

- All new neighborhood disaster cache distributions must meet an equity criteria that may be based on geography or other factors to be proposed.
- Ramp up the community resilience center (CRC) program with the goal of adding 20 new CRCs. Additionally, create a new similar program focusing on apartment buildings with the goal of onboarding 100 apartment buildings.
- Ramp up the volunteer CERT District Coordinators program so that every fire district has a coordinator, and provide additional support to district coordinators.
- Launch an equitably distributed post-disaster services hub program modeled on Portland's BEECN program to ensure that every person in Berkeley is within walking distance of a volunteer-staffed services hub that serves the public.
- Explore a grants program in partnership with CESC (Community Energy Services Corp) for low-income households to receive seismic safety evaluations and services performed by CESC in their homes.
- Make all disaster preparedness programs and services available in multiple languages consistent with other City communications.
- Develop clear, quantitative measures and targets for the neighborhood cache program, the CRC program, the dumpster program and any other disaster preparedness or response program with a yearly assessment of success.

2. Yearly Citywide Exercise

Require that the Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinate an annual citywide Emergency Exercise, in which every city department participates. Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), CERT neighborhood groups, CRCs, BEECNs and Volunteer Corps with drill scenarios, and coordinate with UC Berkeley, BUSD, and neighboring cities.

3. School Preparedness

Develop a program collaborating between City Office of Emergency Services (OES) and schools in Berkeley to improve school preparedness. Require that the OES offers at least 3 hours of disaster training per year, per school, to teachers/staff at K-12 public schools in Berkeley.

4. Disaster Programs Equity for Renters

Ensure that City disaster programs serve renters and not just property owners in Berkeley. Consider these improvements:

- Develop an ordinance to require that apartment buildings with three or more units maintain sufficient water to supply their residents with water for three days in the event of a disaster, or develop a program that provides incentives for disaster supply storage.
- Create a program similar to the CRC (Community Resilience Centers) program focused on multi-unit apartment buildings. Incorporate internships or volunteer staff to scale the program with the target of adding 100 buildings.
- When the OES is setting up emergency caches at multi-unit buildings as part of the CRC program, input from renters must be included in the conversation, and access to emergency caches must be given to a minimum of two on-site residents.
- Develop an ordinance to require that in multi-unit apartment buildings with no on-site manager, a minimum of two on-site residents must be given access to the utility shut-off valves.
- Require that the OES offer a minimum of 6 CERT trainings per year to apartment-dwellers at their apartment location
- Create an ordinance that requires all rental agreements in Berkeley to allow renters to brace furniture and strap the hot water heater so that it doesn't fall over in an earthquake, and make this effective for existing as well as new rental agreements.
- Update the Demolition ordinance to explicitly address disasters. Specifically, are units that were rent-controlled before a large earthquake going to come back as rent-controlled in the recovery?
- Refer the Rent Board to provide a legal review of the legal rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords when a building is red-tagged due to an earthquake: Is the lease terminated? Does the tenant need to continue to pay rent? Is the tenant entitled to relocation assistance? How does this change if the building is eventually demolished vs. fixed?

- Add disaster preparedness items to the yearly RHSP (Rental Housing Safety Program) self-check form. Require RHSP self-check for short-term rental properties.

5. Post-Disaster Communications

Develop a plan to improve post-disaster Communications. Consider these improvements:

- Develop an equitably distributed post-disaster communications hub program modeled on Portland's BEECN program to ensure that every person in Berkeley is within walking distance of a volunteer-staffed disaster communication and services hub that serves the public. As with all other disaster preparedness programs, integrate accountability with quantitative measures in the design of this program.
- Evaluate adoption of FirstNet for first responders and whether this can reduce radio expenses.
- Reinstate the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) designation for volunteer HAM radio operators.
- Improve the signal of AM 1610 (Berkeley's emergency radio) so that it can be heard throughout Berkeley.

6. City Staff Training

Develop a plan to provide a yearly disaster training to all City employees including the following topics:

1. What is my responsibility in a citywide emergency?
2. Familiarity with equipment, tools, supplies that I would need to do my job.
3. Family and home preparedness to increase my chances of being able to help at work rather than abandoning post to deal with home situation.

7. Volunteer Corps

Create a Volunteer Corps program with a dedicated staff coordinator to support, manage, and credential qualified volunteers for post disaster response (including medical, building inspection, search and rescue, etc.), including reinstating the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) designation for volunteer HAM radio operators. Integrate accountability with quantitative measures in the design of this program.

8. Disaster Shelters

Assess and share with the public how much sheltering capacity the City currently has. Set a goal to expand sheltering capacity within 5 years to meet 100% of the estimated sheltering need for Berkeley residents based on a 6.7 North Hayward Fault earthquake. Consider the most cost-effective ways to meet post-disaster shelter needs, which may include using non-City-owned property, such as schools, or temporary shelters (e.g. tents), rather than seismic retrofits of City-owned property.

Within 1 year, sign an MOU with BUSD to facilitate disaster sheltering at Berkeley school sites.

9. Reorganize Emergency Management Into a Department

Explore the advantages/disadvantages of moving emergency management into its own city department, as San Francisco (SFDEM) and Portland OR (PBEM) have done. A new department reporting to the City Manager would coordinate the cross-disciplinary elements of emergency preparedness and response including first responders, public works, public health, building inspection, climate resilience, and community organizing elements which are currently floating through multiple departments. This would also ensure subject-matter expertise in the department leadership.

10. Improve Access to CERT Training

Develop a plan for increasing access to CERT training. Consider exploring:

- Partnerships with other cities to develop a regionally coordinated CERT system in which all Bay Area residents can access a shared CERT training schedule and take classes in neighboring cities.
- Reducing the minimum age of participation.
- Partnerships with the University of California.
- Offering training in more locations and a variety of times of day and days of the week
- Require a minimum of 40 3-hour CERT trainings, including six trainings at apartment buildings, and 6 weekend academy trainings be offered by OES each year

11. Increase home water storage

Increase home water storage for disaster use in Berkeley. Consider these improvements:

- Develop a plan to offer low-priced 55-gallon water containers to Berkeley residents. The City can purchase barrels in bulk, store them, and sell them to residents at forums, fairs, and online at the bulk rate. Offering delivery will increase adoption.
- Develop a program to encourage rain water catchment in Berkeley homes and apartments.

12. Improve fire safety and access/egress in hills fire zone

Develop a city ordinance to improve fire safety in the hills fire zone. Consider these improvements:

- Restrict parking on red flag days to ensure access for response vehicles, similar to a Los Angeles red flag restricted parking program.
- Limit parking to one side of the street on any streets narrower than 26 feet.
- Require major remodels and all ADU conversions to include indoor fire sprinklers
- Incentivize and enforce fire safe vegetation management on private properties in the fire zone
- Increase fire prevention staffing.

13. Business Continuity Support

Create emergency plans for and with local business owners to ensure that their businesses do not close soon after a natural disaster. Set a target of OES - using volunteers, interns, or consultants to gain expertise - providing one-on-one mentoring for at least 20 small businesses per year in emergency preparedness and business continuity planning.

14. Disaster Preparedness Funding

Dedicate city staff time to applying for and administering grants from BAUASI, State of California, or other sources for disaster preparedness improvements. Explore other forms of funding partnerships.

BACKGROUND

The Bay Area is highly vulnerable to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

Six significant fault zones are present in the Bay Area. Notably, scientists are convinced that the Hayward Fault has reached the point where a powerful, damaging quake can be expected at any time. According to a 1996 Earthquake Engineering Research Institute report, the next major Hayward Fault quake is expected to cause significant loss of life and extensive damage to homes, businesses, and infrastructure, such as transportation and utilities.

It is imperative that we prepare our community for disasters.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The recommendations are in line with our environmental sustainability goals.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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