

2021 Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Emergency Management Committee recommends that Council receive this report for the Corporate Record.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, 2022 FEBRUARY 23:

That Council receive this report for the Corporate Record.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In accordance with the *Emergency Management Bylaw 25M2002*, Administration reports annually through the Emergency Management Committee to provide confidence on the status of emergency preparedness in Calgary.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** Being aware of the top disaster risks for Calgary and understanding how to prepare allows citizens to take actions that protect themselves, their families, and communities, and allows Council to understand measures being taken to manage disaster risks in Calgary.
- **Why does it matter?** Understanding and reducing disaster risk will help ensure Calgarians, businesses, and communities stay safe during a disaster and help The City prepare for future disasters.
- The *2021 Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary* report highlights the preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery activities undertaken by the agency over the last year and forecasts future planning priorities.
- The City prepares for high-risk hazards by implementing strategies focused on reducing risk and increasing resilience. Strategies are informed by the Canadian *Disaster Risk Reduction Framework* and further aligned to a Calgary context by basing all work on a foundational local *Disaster Risk Assessment*.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

While much of 2021 was spent monitoring and responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the *2021 Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary* report (Attachment 2) revisits Calgary's highest risks, summarizes the added challenges, and highlights the many accomplishments through the year, such as:

- Numerous key COVID-19 initiatives were undertaken such as coordinating vaccine availability and outreach, communication campaigns focussed on mental health and getting vaccinated, continuing to strengthen the collaboration on COVID-19 across organizations, and a gratitude card initiative for Calgary's front line workers.
- To prepare for priority environmental risks, response plans were developed for spring and summer severe storms, tornado, and extreme heat.
- Two full-scale exercises were conducted that tested The City's river flooding and rail incident responses. These topics were also explored with Emergency Management

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Committee through the Status of Emergency Preparedness risk focus reports and panel presentations.

The report also overviews future planning priorities such as:

- Releasing a new 2022 Disaster Risk Assessment that will inform the next service plans and budget cycle.
- Continuing with risk panel presentations to Emergency Management Committee on flooding and extreme cold weather.
- Enhancing response capability by updating operating processes for the Emergency Operations Centre and developing new response plans with Agency members.
- Continuing to monitor and respond to COVID-19 by maintaining support for vaccinations, continued collaborations, and monitor to enable planning for this evolving pandemic.
- Updating the Corporate Business Continuity Program and Calgary Critical Infrastructure Network to ensure essential services during an emergency.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

More than 60 business units and external groups are members of Calgary Emergency Management Agency, with representatives from a broad cross-section of sectors, including: City services, emergency services, utilities, schools, transportation, business, non-profits, and environmental focussed agencies. Calgary Emergency Management Agency helps connect efforts and expertise across all levels of the Corporation, government, non-profit groups, and private sector to advance resilience in the city.

In addition to being involved in the development of response plans and full-scale emergency exercises, the Agency members also engaged in tabletop exercises regarding Stampede Parade and the municipal election; and contributed to a year-end survey to help direct future preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Calgary Emergency Management Agency members' work aligns with the *Social Wellbeing Policy of prevention (d) The City will aim to stop problems before they start, using a prevention approach* by ensuring the social impacts of disasters are being mitigated before disasters occur.

Environmental

Calgary is exposed to numerous environmental hazards that require coordinated preparedness and mitigation activities to reduce their risk. Of the top 15 priority high risk hazards from the 2021 *Disaster Risk Assessment*, eight are environmental.

Economic

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Calgary Emergency Management Agency members' work addresses the *Economic Resilience Strategy to create a more Resilient Economy*, as mitigation efforts will result in significant future savings.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing operating funding - base

Disaster response planning and preparation exist in the 2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets.

RISK

The City has eight Principal Corporate Risks and emergency preparedness contributes (directly or indirectly) to reducing these risks. This work is highlighted in the *2021 Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary* report.

Additionally, the *Disaster Risk Assessment* identifies 15 high disaster risks, and these are the priority risks for planning and preparing efforts. Attachment 3 summarizes the 2021 Disaster Risk Assessment. Literature indicates that mitigating disaster risk and having strategies in place to decrease the impact is more economically, socially, and environmentally sound than managing disaster consequence.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. 2021 Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary
3. Summary of Disaster Risk 2021

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Not applicable		