

**Community Services Report to  
Emergency Management Committee  
2018 May 23**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
EM2018-0667  
Page 1 of 4**

## **Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary**

---

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Despite the economic downturn and an upward trend in disasters over the past 40 years, The City of Calgary remains prepared to manage any scale of natural, technological, or human-induced emergency. The structure, processes, and practices employed by the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) are designed to be agile and flexible to allow CEMA to address a spectrum of emergencies, from small-scale internal crises to large-scale, city-wide events.

While CEMA is traditionally associated with emergency response, it has been increasingly shifting its focus towards managing the risks, not just the consequences, associated with hazards in the city. Advance planning efforts, proactive coordination on a variety of emerging issues and planned events, ongoing awareness and education activities, and a regular cycle of training and exercising contribute to The City's overall level of preparedness and resilience. The importance of preparedness continues to be the foundation of CEMA's work.

#### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

The Emergency Management Committee recommends that Council receive this report and its attachment for information.

#### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, DATED 2018 MAY 23:**

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report EM2018-0667 be approved.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

This update on the status of emergency preparedness in the city is submitted in accordance with The City of Calgary Emergency Management Bylaw 25M2002, Section 6 (2) which states: "The Director shall, with the advice and assistance of the Agency, submit to Council annually through the Emergency Management Committee, a report on the status of emergency preparedness in the City."

### **BACKGROUND**

Disasters have been on a well-defined upwards trend for 40 years. Preparedness remains a foundational pillar to address risk and many impacts of disasters can be mitigated by limiting exposure and reducing vulnerabilities. Rather than focusing primarily on managing the consequences of these events, CEMA is employing a range of practices and planning efforts to better prepare for and manage the risks.

CEMA maintains an all-hazards planning approach to allow it to adapt its approach to any major emergency or disaster that may occur. Each year, specialized planning is advanced to prepare for specific types of events and issues. In 2017, that advanced planning focused on mass casualty incidents and enhancements to flood evacuation planning. For large planned events, CEMA works in conjunction with a host of Agency members to review plans and monitor large public gatherings to ensure resources are at the ready to respond should any emergency occur.

CEMA is responsible for the evaluation and assessment of disaster risk in Calgary. The disaster risk assessment process was revised in 2017 to be more inclusive and comprehensive, and the

## **Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary**

results of this process, the Disaster Risk Register, will be released later this year. This information will be vital in helping educate the Corporation, citizens and Agency members regarding risks to prepare for in the city and encouraging appropriate treatment and mitigation for these risks.

The economic downturn in Calgary resulted in budget reductions and staff turnover within a number of the organizations that form CEMA's Agency membership. However, CEMA has been able to weather these changes with its Agency members through a constant cycle of training and exercising to ensure a consistent level of preparedness.

The economic downturn and other factors, however, did seem to impact business preparedness for emergencies. There was a just over 10 per cent decline in the percentage of Calgary businesses indicating they had a business continuity plan in place to allow them to quickly resume operations following an emergency. Bolstering this number in the future is essential to ensuring swift economic recovery.

The Corporation demonstrated this past year how the work led by CEMA on identifying and hardening the resources critical for essential service delivery paid off in preventing a critical IT failure that would have had far-reaching implications across many City services. CEMA continues to work with business units to target the resources that require strengthening or redundancies to ensure key services can continue to be delivered following a major emergency, disaster, or business disruption.

Attachment 1 contains a report that demonstrates how The City's level of preparedness directly influenced the outcomes of several emergency events in 2017. The report also highlights the work taking place to advance risk understanding and preparedness across the Corporation, city, and citizens.

## **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

Seven of the last 8 years are among the top 10 years with the most insured losses in Canadian history. Alberta has been particularly active with 7 of the top 10 costliest disaster in Canada having occurred in the province and 5 of 10 having impacted Calgary directly. Since 2000, total public and private losses from disaster events in Calgary are estimated to be greater than \$4 billion. For the Corporation, total losses for this period were close to \$500 million. Increased focus on the management of risk versus the response to the results of major emergency and disaster events is the best way to reduce these costs in the future.

In 2018, CEMA and its members will continue to work towards the four-year preparedness and resiliency goals of the Agency and Corporation through a variety of initiatives, including:

1. Engaging the 22 Agency members with critical infrastructure in better understanding the hazards that threaten infrastructure and considering the mitigation actions to reduce the impact on them;
2. Expanding the emergency preparedness networks in our communities that can be activated in a disaster to support self-sufficiency and recovery;
3. Building awareness of disaster risk to help citizens and Agency members better understand the city-wide and community-specific risks for which they should be prepared. The backbone of preparedness rests in a solid understanding of the risks that individuals and the city may be experience in their communities and within the city as a whole.

## **Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary**

---

Emergencies can take many forms, from local community flooding to buildings no longer safe for their occupants. The same emergency management processes that have guided CEMA's success in emergency response are now being used proactively in advance of emerging events to help prevent and mitigate impacts of these events wherever possible.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Whether it is the actual response to an emergency event or the mitigation and planning work to be done to prevent and prepare for emergencies, CEMA connects the efforts and expertise across all levels of the Corporation, government, non-profit groups and private sector to advance resilience in the city. Today, over 60 business units and external groups are members of CEMA, including representatives from a broad cross section of sectors: City services, emergency services, utilities, schools, transportation, business, non-profits and environment.

CEMA is the Corporate leader in business continuity. Through its network of business continuity coordinators, it works with City business units to identify essential services that must be maintained by City staff under any circumstance to ensure health, safety and security of citizens and employees, or minimize catastrophic costs associated with the loss of service. CEMA engaged all business units this past year to update the Business Continuity Policy to incorporate new best practices to advance Corporate preparedness and resilience.

CEMA is an active participant in the Corporation's resilience and risk discussions and frameworks. Agency members represent organizations that span all segments of the Rockefeller Foundation City Resilience Framework. CEMA's use of the Sendai Framework, a planning instrument for disaster risk reduction, advances the Corporation's understanding of risk and disaster risk reduction through economic, built, and social infrastructure.

Communities are engaged with CEMA through its Ready Calgary program which educates community leaders and members on how to build individual, family and community preparedness. CEMA also connects with over 12,000 Calgary businesses through the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, providing updates to the business community on emergencies impacting them as well as partnering to provide business continuity information and support.

### **Strategic Alignment**

CEMA's work on preparedness and its Action Plan supports Council's Priority to provide *A city of inspiring neighbourhoods*.

Within Community Services' Action Plan 2015-2018, CEMA supports the strategies of *Build resiliency to flooding and Enhance The City's capacity and resiliency to prepare for and respond to pandemics, natural disasters and emergency situations*.

The work of CEMA supports the Corporation's Sustainability Direction 2020 objective *Calgary, its communities and neighbourhoods are safe, resilient and supportive*.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

Emergency preparedness, planning, training and exercises are necessary at an individual, family, community and business level. The level of preparedness is correlated with the ability to resume normalcy in daily life as quickly as possible following an event.

## **Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary**

---

Citizens, families, communities, and businesses in Calgary rely on, and expect, the Corporation to employ strategies and planning in which events that can be prevented are stopped and negative impacts resulting from emergencies and disasters that do occur are minimized.

Preventing events or reducing their impact also has economic implications for the Corporation, citizens and businesses. Prevention and mitigation efforts minimize property loss and support timely resumption of operations at both the Corporate and business level.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

The operating impacts of the preparedness and mitigation strategies and initiatives discussed in the status report have been included within CEMA's and each business unit's business plan and budget presented in Action Plan 2015-2018.

#### ***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

The capital budget impacts of the preparedness and mitigation strategies and initiatives discussed in the status report have been included within CEMA's and each business unit's business plan and budget presented in Action Plan 2015-2018.

### **Risk Assessment**

CEMA's Disaster Risk Assessment is a key contributor to the Corporation's understanding of natural, technological, and human-induced risks facing Calgary. In addition, CEMA's ongoing monitoring of global emergency management events and modifying plans based on learnings from these events ensure the Corporation is prepared for emerging issues that may quickly arise.

CEMA will continue to employ an all-hazards, risk-based approach to its emergency management activities to ensure the Corporation's preparedness for any type of disaster.

<b>REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):</b>
---

CEMA's all-hazards planning ensures the Corporation is prepared for any type of natural, technological, or human-induced emergency that impacts the city.

Prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies employed by CEMA and business unit's to reduce risk and the impact of events on the city are incorporated within Action Plan 2015-2018

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Attachment 1 – Status of Emergency Preparedness in Calgary