

SUBJECT: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

DATE: MAY 6, 2025

PREPARED BY: DIANA LANGLEY, CITY MANAGER

PRESENTED BY: DIANA LANGLEY, CITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

Staff is recommending that the City of Louisville initiate discussions with the City of Boulder and Boulder County to receive disaster management and recovery services through the Boulder Office of Disaster Management (Boulder ODM). As it will take time to determine the viability of Louisville joining Boulder ODM, staff is recommending that the City hire a consultant to review and assimilate existing resources related to emergency preparedness and disaster management, and prepare, at a minimum, an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and a comprehensive, prioritized list of recommended implementation measures. Staff is requesting Council authorization to initiate discussions related to joining Boulder ODM and develop a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to prepare an EOP and prioritized list of implementation measures.

BACKGROUND / PRIOR DISCUSSIONS:

Boulder Office of Disaster Management

In 2005, the City of Boulder and Boulder County executed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to form the Office of Emergency Management to oversee the delivery of disaster services. In 2022, the name was changed to the Office of Disaster Management (ODM) for the City of Boulder and Boulder County, with a mission focusing on disaster management through community preparedness, mitigation of hazards, and effective disaster response and recovery.

ODM has a highly skilled and dedicated team, led by Director Mike Chard, and is overseen by a Board of Directors currently consisting of Sheriff Curtis Johnson, City of Boulder Police Chief Stephen Redfearn, Boulder Fire-Rescue Chief Mike Calerazzo, Boulder County Administrator Jana Peterson, and City of Boulder City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde.

Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources*Continuity of Operations Plan:*

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is designed to maintain essential city operations during disruptions, such as disasters, emergencies, or unforeseen events, ensuring critical services continue with minimal impact. The City has an internal COOP which was originally created in 2009 and later updated during COVID-19. Staff is currently working on rewriting the COOP to ensure the plan is relevant to current standards and useable for any city interruptions.

Emergency Operations Plan:

An Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a comprehensive guide that outlines how the City will respond to various emergencies to coordinate efforts, minimize damage, and protect residents. It details the roles and responsibilities of city officials, emergency responders, and organizations, ensuring that resources are used efficiently, communication is clear, and safety is prioritized. The City's current EOP was presented to the City Council in 2012.

2022-2027 Boulder Hazard Mitigation Plan:

The [2022-2027 Boulder Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) identifies the hazards that threaten communities in Boulder County, evaluates the risks from those hazards, and outlines a strategy to reduce or eliminate the risks. Louisville is specifically addressed in Annex E of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies hazards specific to Louisville, critical facilities and landmarks, a vulnerability assessment, mitigation capabilities, opportunities for capability enhancement and improvement, and specific mitigation projects.

Creation of the Recovery & Resilience Division:

In early 2023, staff hired a consultant to develop the Emergency Improvement Plan (EIP) (2023), aimed at enhancing emergency preparedness following the Marshall Fire. This plan identified gaps, provided guidance, and outlined key considerations for strengthening the City's ability to respond to future disasters. This document was one of the drivers to create the Recovery & Resilience Division.

Following the EIP, the Recovery & Resilience Division was established in August 2023 to provide ongoing support for both internal and external recovery efforts following the Marshall Fire (2021). The purpose of the Division is to:

- Support community recovery initiatives, providing direct assistance, resources, and guidance to impacted residents.
- Build long-term resilience initiatives, focusing on preparedness, grant management, and mitigation strategies to strengthen the community's ability to adapt and recover from future emergencies and disasters.

- Expand partnerships in the region to support emergency preparedness.
- Coordinate all FEMA Public Assistance closeout projects to ensure compliance.

Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment of Public Lands:

In 2023, the City initiated a new wildfire hazard and risk assessment ([WRA](#)) for public lands in and around the City. The purpose was to develop a comprehensive, science-based wildfire hazard and risk assessment and to provide mitigation recommendations for the City's public lands and facility grounds to be more resilient against future events. General best management practices were summarized in the report to inform short- and long-term management decisions.

Boulder County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

The [Boulder County Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(CWPP\)](#), dated August 2024, provides a means for Boulder County to evaluate current conditions related to wildfire risks and hazards. The goals of the CWPP are to protect lives and reduce risk to property and critical infrastructure by identifying high-risk areas and prioritize actions for minimizing impacts of wildfire to homes, people, and infrastructure. While the CWPP is not a policy document, it does identify and highlight several projects and action priorities specific to Louisville.

Louisville Fire Hardening Code:

On November 4, 2024, the City Council approved [Ordinance 1884, Series 2024](#), creating a city-wide fire hardening code that applies to all residential and commercial structures, including new structures, additions to existing structures, and replacement of building materials when regulated by the building code.

Open Space Wildfire Mitigation:

During 2023 and 2024, the city utilized a variety of measures including trail and fence line fuel reduction, cattle and goat grazing, and noxious weed management to mitigate 636.94 acres of open space. A [story map](#) is provided on the City's website at which provides a treatment map showing the location of the mitigation activities, mitigation table, description of types of mitigation, and partners.

Wildfire Mitigation Campaign Development Contract with Fors Marsh:

On March 18, 2025, the City Council approved a wildfire mitigation campaign development [contract](#) with Fors Marsh to consolidate existing wildfire mitigation resources on the City's website into a single, easily navigable space. The contract is currently broken into three (3) phases with deliverables as follows:

1. Phase 1 – Initial project meetings & planning, research, scoping, strategy development, and materials development
 - a. Deliverables
 - i. Campaign strategy & project plan

- ii. Suite of campaign products
- 2. Phase 2 – Education and outreach
 - a. Potential Deliverables
 - i. Communications calendar
 - ii. Campaign partner inventory
- 3. Phase 3 – Final deliverables and close out
 - a. Potential Deliverables
 - i. Campaign implementation playbook
 - ii. Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) policy recommendations paper

The work is to be completed during 2025.

Crisis Communications Plan

The City has developed a Crisis Communication Plan to work alongside the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), to provide a structured approach to both internal and external communications during emergencies and interruptions. This plan helps establish clear protocols for information-sharing, ensuring timely, accurate, and coordinated messaging to residents and staff.

Louisville Fire Protection District – Louisville Wildfire and Conflagration Risk Assessment:

Louisville Fire Protection District has contracted with The Ember Alliance to prepare a Wildfire and Conflagration Risk Assessment to enhance the City's understanding of fire behavior in the urban landscape and identify actionable strategies to reduce the risk of structure ignition. The study is broken into three phases: 1) data gathering and quality control, 2) hazard and risk analysis, and 3) outreach planning and document drafting. The final scope of the study is being finalized, and the study is expected to take six months to complete.

ANALYSIS:

Over the past few years, the City has made significant efforts to address disaster preparedness and emergency response, while also implementing recovery efforts from the Marshall Fire. However, the City does not have the staffing or resources necessary to sustain meaningful improvements and maintain steadfast vigilance. To efficiently and effectively address disaster management preparedness, response, and recovery, staff recommends that Louisville join Boulder ODM and hire a consultant to prepare an Emergency Operations Plan and prioritized list of implementation measures.

Disaster Management & Response

While Boulder ODM provides overarching disaster management services to the entire county, Louisville would benefit from more specific and intensive disaster preparedness

and recovery services. Services currently provided by Boulder ODM to the unincorporated areas of Boulder County, and through agreement, the City of Boulder include:

- Prepare and keep current preparedness, mitigation, emergency operations resource mobilization, hazard specific disaster response, and recovery plans consistent with the standards promulgated by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management.
- Prepare, keep current and distribute to appropriate officials, a yearly written work plan of the emergency and disaster responsibilities for the office of disaster management and all local agencies and officials.
- Develop an ongoing process of disaster risk assessment, prioritization of risks, action plan for risk reduction, after action reporting process, improvement plan implementation, and evaluation of results.
- Coordinate disaster planning, training and education efforts.
- Coordinate with all state and federal agencies to obtain services, equipment, supplies, materials and funds for responding to and recovering from disaster which are beyond the response capabilities of the City or County.
- Negotiation on behalf of the City and County with other duly constituted governmental agencies with the State of Colorado for establishment of such mutual aid agreements as may be necessary.
- Operate the Emergency Operations Center and coordinate the Multiple Agency Coordinating System (MACS), a voluntary organization, which coordinates the activities of political jurisdictions in Boulder County, so as to minimize suffering and loss of life and property in any natural or human-made disaster through the effective utilization of critical resources.
- Coordinate with a local Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) capability to ensure volunteer resources can be utilized to the individual needs of the elderly, infirm or handicapped during disasters or other emergency situations which impose hardships on such individuals.
- Seek to secure federal grant funding and programs for emergency management programs, community preparedness, disaster response, mitigation and recovery to meet local requirements in mitigating natural or human-made disasters.
- Manage federal grant funding and programs as awarded with those standards established by federal agencies.

During initial discussions with the Boulder ODM Director, Mike Chard, Boulder ODM does not currently have the staffing capacity to assist Louisville with the services noted above. If Louisville is successful in working with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join Boulder ODM, Director Chard anticipates that at least one additional full-time equivalent employee will be required. In addition, Louisville will need to participate in general overall administration costs.

Preparation of an Emergency Operations Plan and Prioritized List of Implementation Measures

While the City has a multitude of emergency preparedness/disaster management resources, there is not a current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) or comprehensive list of mitigation measures and projects recommended in all the various studies and assessments.

An EOP provides specific guidance to those activated in the event of an emergency in order to save lives, enhance the health and safety of citizens, and protect property and the environment. It acts as an activation guide and authorizes the City's personnel in all its departments to perform their duties before, during, and after an emergency. It outlines the process to proclaim an emergency, provides the plan for the continuity of government, provides checklists, and analyzes specific hazards/threats.

Many studies and assessments have been prepared that analyze threats to the City and provide mitigation measures/projects for implementation to minimize those threats. However, there has not been a comprehensive review and compilation of those mitigation measures/projects so that the measures can be prioritized for funding and implementation.

Staff is requesting authorization to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a consultant to prepare an EOP and review the various studies and assessments that have been prepared to develop a comprehensive, prioritized list of implementation measures.

Even if the City is successful in joining Boulder ODM, an EOP will still be required.

2025 COUNCIL WORK PLAN:

Disaster preparedness and emergency response are vital to support the City Council's 2025 Work Plan, focusing on Council's priorities of economic vitality, safety, core services, and housing. Residents and business owners need to feel secure in the City's ability to adequately prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Budgeted?: **No**

Funds are not currently budgeted to join Boulder ODM or hire a consultant to prepare an EOP and a comprehensive, prioritized list of recommended implementation measures. Depending on timing, either a budget amendment or budget request will be required to fund both activities.

ALTERNATIVE(S):

1. Do not initiate discussions with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join Boulder ODM. If the City does not join Boulder ODM, then staff will recommend and request additional resources to enhance current disaster management and emergency preparedness efforts.

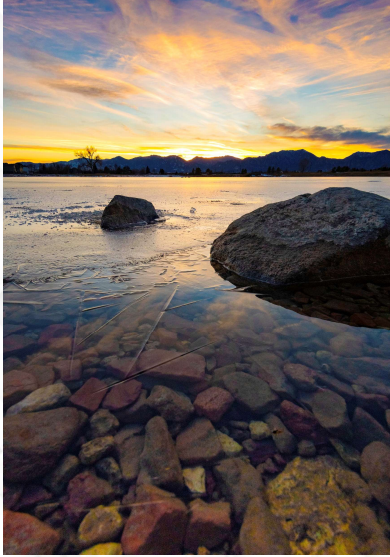
2. Do not proceed with a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to develop an Emergency Operations Plan and prioritized list of implementation measures. Staff will continue to utilize the 2012 EOP and make edits as necessary to try to update the document.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Council authorize the City Manager to initiate discussions with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join Boulder ODM, and to develop a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to prepare an Emergency Operations Plan and prioritized list of implementation measures.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Staff Presentation



Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Response

May 6, 2025



Background

- Boulder Office of Disaster Management (ODM)
 - Formed in 2005 between Boulder County and the City of Boulder to oversee the delivery of disaster services.
 - Mission focuses on disaster management through community preparedness, mitigation of hazards, and effective disaster response and recovery.
 - ODM has a highly skilled and dedicated team led by Mike Chard.
 - Overseen by a Board of Directors consisting of Sheriff Curtis Johnson, City of Boulder Police Chief Stephen Redfearn, Boulder Fire-Rescue Chief Mike Calerazzo, Boulder County Administrator Jana Peterson, and City of Boulder City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde.



Background

■ Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources



Background

■ Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources

- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) – Internal COOP was created in 2009 and later updated during COVID-19. Staff is in the process of rewriting the COOP.
- Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) – Presented to Council in 2012. The EOP details the roles and responsibilities of city officials, emergency responders, and organizations.
- 2022-2027 Boulder Hazard Mitigation Plan – Identifies the hazards that threaten communities in Boulder County, evaluates the risks from those hazards, and outlines a strategy to reduce or eliminate the risks. Louisville is specifically addressed in Annex E.

Background

- Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources
 - Creation of the Recovery & Resilience Division – Established in August 2023 to provide ongoing support for both internal and external recovery efforts following the Marshall Fire (2021).
 - Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment of Public Lands (WRA) – Prepared in 2023 to develop a comprehensive, science-based wildfire hazard and risk assessment and to provide mitigation recommendations for the City's public lands and facility grounds to be more resilient against future events.

Background

- Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources
 - Boulder County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) – Finalized in August 2024, the CWPP provides a means for Boulder County to evaluate current conditions related to wildfire risks and hazards.
 - Fire Hardening Code – In November 2024, the City Council approved Ordinance 1884, Series 2024, creating a city-wide fire hardening code that applies to all residential and commercial structures, including new structures, additions to existing structures, and replacement of building materials when regulated by the building code.

Background

- Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources
 - Open Space Wildfire Mitigation – During 2023 and 2024, the City utilized a variety of measures including trail and fence line fuel reduction, cattle and goat grazing, and noxious weed management to mitigate 636.94 acres of open space.
 - Wildfire Mitigation Campaign Development Contract with Fors Marsh – In March 2025, Council approved a wildfire mitigation campaign development contract to consolidate existing wildfire mitigation resources on the City's website into a single, easily navigable space.

Background

- Louisville Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Management Resources
 - Crisis Communications Plan – Staff have developed an internal communications plan to provide a structured approach to internal and external communications during emergencies and interruptions to provide timely, accurate, and coordinated messaging to residents and staff.
 - Louisville Fire Protection District (LFPD) – Louisville Wildfire and Conflagration Risk Assessment (WCRA) – LFPD has contracted with The Ember Alliance to prepare a WCRA to enhance the City's understanding of fire behavior in the urban landscape and identify actionable strategies to reduce the risk of structure ignition.

Analysis

- Disaster Management and Response
 - Boulder ODM provides overarching disaster management services to the entire county.
 - Through an IGA, Boulder ODM provides preparedness, response, and recovery services to the City of Boulder for items such as:
 - Prepare and keep current preparedness, mitigation, emergency operations resource mobilization, hazard specific disaster response, and recovery plans consistent with the standards promulgated by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management.
 - Develop an ongoing process of disaster risk assessment, prioritization of risks, action plan for risk reduction, after action reporting process, improvement plan implementation, and evaluation of results.
 - Coordinate disaster planning, training and education efforts.
 - Operate the Emergency Operations Center.
 - Seek to secure federal grant funding and programs for emergency management programs, community preparedness, disaster response, mitigation and recovery, and manage federal grant funding and programs.

Analysis

- Disaster Management and Response
 - Boulder ODM does not currently have the staffing capacity to assist Louisville with the services noted.
 - If Louisville is successful in working with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join Boulder ODM, Director Mike Chard anticipates that at least one additional full-time equivalent employee will be required. Louisville would also need to participate in general overall administration costs.

Analysis

- Preparation of an Emergency Operations Plan and Prioritized List of Implementation Measures
 - City has a multitude of emergency preparedness/disaster management resources but lacks a current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) or comprehensive list of mitigation measures and projects recommended in all the various studies and assessments.
 - An EOP provides specific guidance to those activated in the event of an emergency and authorizes the City's personnel to perform their duties before, during, and after an emergency. It outlines the process to proclaim an emergency, provides the plan for the continuity of government, provides checklists, and analyzes specific hazards/threats.

Analysis

- Preparation of an Emergency Operations Plan and Prioritized List of Implementation Measures
 - Many of the studies and assessments provide mitigation measures and projects for implementation to minimize threats.
 - There has not been a comprehensive review and compilation of those mitigation measures/projects so that measures can be prioritized for funding and implementation.

2025 Council Work Plan

- Disaster preparedness and emergency response are vital to support the City Council's 2025 Work Plan, focusing on Council's priorities of economic vitality, safety, core services, and housing. Residents and business owners need to feel secure in the City's ability to adequately prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Fiscal Impact

- Funds are not currently budgeted to join Boulder ODM or hire a consultant to prepare an EOP and a comprehensive, prioritized list of recommended implementation measures. Depending on timing, either a budget amendment or budget request will be required to fund both activities.

Alternatives

- Do not initiate discussions with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join Boulder ODM. If the City does not join Boulder ODM, then staff will recommend and request additional resources to enhance current disaster management and emergency preparedness efforts.
- Do not proceed with a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to develop an Emergency Operations Plan and prioritized list of implementation measures. Staff will continue to utilize the 2012 EOP and make edits as necessary to try to update the document.

Recommendation

- Council authorize the City Manager to:
 - Initiate discussions with Boulder County and the City of Boulder to join the Boulder Office of Disaster Management.
 - Develop a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to prepare an Emergency Operations Plan and prioritized list of implementation measures.