

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE



Date: April 21, 2017

To: The Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair  
City Council Budget and Finance Committee  
Attention: Richard Williams, Legislative Assistant  
Office of the City Clerk

From: Aram Sahakian, General Manager  
Emergency Management Department

Subject: **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON THE  
MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018**

The Emergency Management Department (EMD) coordinates emergency preparedness, planning, response, recovery and mitigation efforts for the City of Los Angeles. We support the Mayor's goal of ensuring that the City of Los Angeles is the safest large city in the country by working with City agencies and our partners in government and the private sector to coordinate disaster planning, training, exercises and management of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). We also work closely with City Council Offices, Neighborhood Councils and numerous community groups to help prepare our residents for disasters and emergencies.

Over the past decade EMD has worked closely with the Office of the Mayor to compete for and receive federal Homeland Security grants to supplement our general fund budget. These sources of revenue have been significantly reduced over the past two fiscal years and we have worked with the Mayor and City Council to regularize core positions and programs, especially those related to community outreach and resiliency.

Our budget packages for the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year included requests for positions and resources for community outreach and preparedness including a joint request with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to develop additional community based plans. These requests were not included in the Mayor's proposed budget and if adopted as proposed, they will result in the net loss of two key staff positions working on key preparedness activities. To that end, the following are our areas of concern:

### **Community Emergency Management Program**

EMD administers a community emergency management program through our Community Emergency Management Division (CEM). In order to ensure the continued effectiveness of the program, EMD requested regularization of four previously grant funded positions; three

Emergency Management Coordinator I (EMC I) positions and one Senior Project Coordinator position. The Mayor's proposed budget added regular authority for one EMC I position and continued funding and resolution authority for one Senior Project Coordinator position in support of community emergency planning. Two EMC I positions are not continued.

Elimination of these two positions would have a profound negative impact on our service deliveries in key areas both internal and external. EMD is a small department in comparison to other major municipal emergency management programs; we have twenty-five full time employees, eleven of which are at the EMC I level. An analysis of how our program compares to other major cities is attached for your review.

The proposed budget represents a 20% reduction in our EMC I professional emergency management staff. These staff performs a range of critical functions in support of community preparedness and City response coordination that would be negatively affected if the positions are not funded. The following is a breakdown of those functions and the anticipated negative impact.

#### Disaster Management Bureau Program (DMB)

EMD presently assigns one EMC I position to each of the City's four Disaster Management Bureaus (Central, South, West and Valley). This aligns with the geographic bureaus used by both the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). The two positions not funded in the proposed 2017-2018 Fiscal Year budget are assigned to this key program and their loss would cut our resources in half. This program ensures that our public education and outreach efforts are coordinated with LAPD and LAFD and provides structure to our other community preparedness programs.

The DMB program allows EMD to partner with LAPD and LAFD and leverage our resources to address public safety programs and events. These four EMC I positions have established relationships with the community and the other public safety agencies that have taken years to build. If two of the four CEM EMC I positions are cut, this program would not be able to continue operations at its present level. This would result in a less prepared community and would also impact our standing with the community and other partner departments.

#### Neighborhood Emergency Plans

Establishment of neighborhood based emergency plans is a core element of our community emergency management program. The Mayor's Office has set goals for neighborhood plans for the coming fiscal year that will be jeopardized by loss of staff positions. EMD will not be able to meet the established goal of developing an additional 32 neighborhood plans in the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year if these positions are not funded.

The four CEM EMC I positions are responsible for providing hands-on assistance to neighborhood and community groups in developing neighborhood emergency plans (14 were completed last year) using the City's nationally awarded "5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness Program" for housing blocks, apartment complexes, homeowners associations, gated communities and others. This program would be in jeopardy if two positions are cut and this would result in a less prepared community. It would also negatively

impact our standing with the community if we are unable to address requests by the community to develop plans.

### Community Outreach Events

CEM staff coordinate and attend nearly 150 community outreach events every fiscal year. These programs would be in jeopardy if two of the four EMC I positions are not funded and our service level to Council Districts and Neighborhood Councils will be greatly diminished.

These weekday, weekend and evening outreach events consist of staffing emergency fairs and events, public safety events, health fairs, City Council Office events, Neighborhood Council events, private business events, non-profit events, school events, faith based events, and many others that EMD is asked to participate in. This service would be in jeopardy and would result in a less prepared community. It would also negatively impact our working relationship with the communities we serve.

CEM staff are also requested to formally speak/present on emergency preparedness to numerous community groups including homeowner associations, senior centers, disability, access and functional needs (DAFN) groups, private schools, Neighborhood Council boards, City Council Office requests, Community Police Advisory Boards, Mayor's Office groups, businesses, faith based groups, non-profit groups, and many others. While some of these occur during normal working hours, many are during the evening and on weekends. This service would be in jeopardy if the two positions are cut and would result in a less prepared community.

### Faith Based Outreach Program

The EMD Faith Based Outreach Program has been a very successful initiative which has provided the City with critical resources and planning efforts to prepare our residents for disasters and emergencies. Loss of staff would put this program in jeopardy as it is chaired by a CEM EMC I who has built relationships with the faith based community to better prepare Houses of Worship for disasters so they can assist the City during times of crisis with their resources. This would result in a less prepared community and would also would also negatively impact our working relationship with the faith based sector.

### Partnership with Neighborhood Empowerment

CEM's EMC I positions provide monthly staffing and continuing assistance to the Neighborhood Council Emergency Preparedness Alliance (NCEPA), chaired by Len Shaffer (Commissioner), to better prepare the 96 City Neighborhood Councils. This would result in a less prepared community and would negatively impact our working relationship with the communities we serve.

### City Council Office Emergency Plan Support

EMD provides City Council Offices with direct support on development of District Emergency Plans and Continuity of Operations Plans. EMC I staff provide training and support which includes table top exercises and advance planning for specific threats like storms, flooding, earthquakes as well as major planned events like the LA Marathon and May Day.

### Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Response

All of our EMC I positions are assigned to serve as responders to the City's EOC. Elimination of two positions will reduce our EOC staffing cadre and mean we are unable to staff all

required positions during a disaster. Over the past year the EOC has been activated for more than a dozen events including major ones such as the Presidential Inauguration and Women's March, the 2017 Los Angeles Marathon and the 2017 May Day incidents. EMD provides critical leadership for the EOC and loss of any EMC I positions negatively impacts our facility and the coordination of information and resources during disasters and major planned events.

#### Emergency Operations Center Training and Exercises

All of our EMC I positions are required to assist with design and delivery of EOC responder training programs including our EOC 101/201/301 series as well as our monthly WebEOC systems training. Loss of any EMC I positions reduces our training cadre and our exercise planning capabilities. EMD leads a major EOC functional exercise each year as well as other key exercises such as Defense Support to Civil Authority seminars, Cyber Security table top exercises and our recent EOC Executive Exercise that was attended by the Mayor and members of the City's Emergency Operations Board (EOB).

#### Duty Team Program

All of our EMC I positions are assigned to serve as EMD Duty Team members. These teams provide 24-hour response readiness for the EOC. EMD Duty Teams are also responsible for Daily Brief situation reports to our stakeholders, are tasked with activation of the EOC, and are assigned to plan for and staff Liaison Officer positions at Unified Command Posts (UCP) and Incident Command Posts (ICP) for events like the Academy Awards, Aliso Canyon Gas Leak incident, Firmin Street Oil Well incident, and the Lugo Street Fire incident. EMD averages more than twenty such events each year.

#### Emergency Plan Review and Revision

All of our EMC I positions are assigned written Emergency Operations Plan review and revision duties. In the past this has included major programs such as plan review and revision in response to an Americans with Disabilities lawsuit. More than 20 Emergency Plan annexes and 100 related Standard Operating Procedures were reviewed and revised by EMD staff. Any reduction in EMC I staff positions negatively impacts our ability to maintain compliance with this court order related to this lawsuit.

#### **Conclusion**

EMD relies on its EMC I positions to provide a range of critical emergency operations functions. We have a small but dedicated cadre of professionals assigned to these functions. Over the past two years we were able to fill vacancies and bring on board new emergency management professionals with a wealth of government and private sector experience. Losing any of these core positions would be a tremendous setback for EMD in terms of service levels, achievement of goals set by the Mayor's Office and our commitment to make Los Angeles the country's safest big city. We respectfully ask for your support in maintaining our current staffing levels and reinstating the two unfunded EMC I positions.

Attachment

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STAFFING: A COMPARISON ACROSS MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS

The City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department (EMD) is charged with the task of coordinating the emergency preparedness and planning efforts for all City departments, 4 million residents, and over 400,000 businesses within the 469.1 square miles of the City. This is in addition to managing the response, recovery, and mitigation efforts of the City during and after a major emergency or disaster, which includes running the City's Emergency Operations Center.

This document illustrates the current EMD staffing capability compared to other major cities across the nation. EMD has a total of 26 full time staff, of which 22 have emergency management responsibilities.

### *Emergency Management Staffing in Six Metropolitan Areas as of October 2016*

City	Population*	Size in Square Miles	Operational Period	Full Time Emergency Management Staff in 2016	Full Time Emergency Management Staff in 2015	Full Time Emergency Management Staff per Million Residents**
Washington D.C.***	672,228	61.4	24 hours	N/A	53 <sup>A</sup>	80
San Francisco	864,816	46.7	On Call/Duty Officer	22 <sup>B</sup>	23	25
Philadelphia	1,567,442	134.1	On Call	29 <sup>C</sup>	29	19
<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>3,971,883</b>	<b>469.1</b>	<b>Duty Officer</b>	<b>22<sup>D</sup></b>	20	6
New York	8,550,405	303.3	24 hours	236 <sup>E</sup>	236	28

\* US Census Bureau 2015 population estimates.

\*\* Rounded to the nearest whole number.

\*\*\* Washington D.C. figures are from 2015 only.

<sup>A</sup>: The **Washington, D.C. Homeland Security & Emergency Management Agency** employs 92 full-time staff, 53 of which had primary emergency management responsibilities in 2015. Of the 92 total positions, 65.5 are grant-funded. It should be noted that the population almost doubles in size during the day, which is accounted for in the emergency preparedness planning.

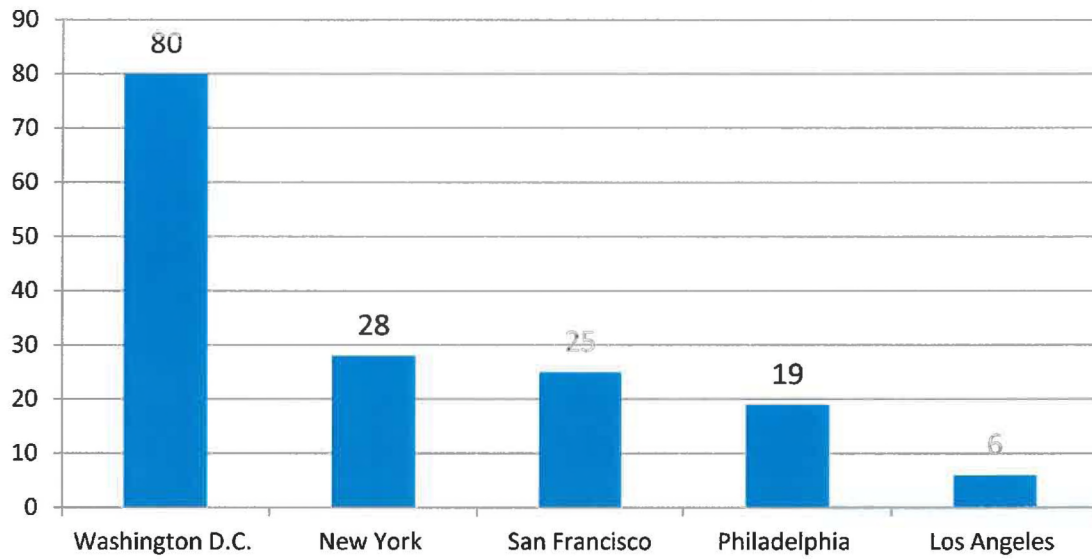
<sup>B</sup>: The **San Francisco Department of Emergency Management** emergency management staff includes 22 full-time employees and 3 on call IT positions. There are an additional 18 grant funded positions working in the UASI Division. With the exception of the Executive Director's vehicle, there are no City vehicles dedicated to the department, but all employees do have access to the City vehicle pool.

<sup>C</sup>: The **City of Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management** employs 31 full time permanent staff, 29 of which have emergency management as their primary responsibility. Of the 31 positions, 25 are currently grant funded. There are 4 positions assigned a permanent take home vehicle. Other staff members are assigned a temporary take home vehicle when on call. The City of Philadelphia is currently revising their organizational chart and does not have a copy available at this time.

<sup>D</sup>: The **City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department** has 26 full time employees, 22 of which are dedicated to emergency management functions and 4 of which are dedicated to administrative services. The department also has 7 part time staff (interns). 4 full time and 7 part time positions are currently grant funded. EMD employees have access to the City vehicle pool.

<sup>E</sup>: The **New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM)** has a total of 254 employees, of which 236 are full-time, 2 are part-time, 7 are interns and 9 are fellows. OEM funds 36 of these positions from their general budget. Of the remaining positions, 120 are grant funded, 76 are detailed from another agency and 22 are consultants. 54 employees currently have access to a take home vehicle.

## Number of Full Time Emergency Staff Per Million Residents



## Number of Full Time Emergency Staff Per 10 Square Miles

