TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2006 CMR: 403:06

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL DISASTER PREPARATION RESOURCES

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the following recommendation for disaster preparation resources and the associated funding plan, as outlined in this report:

1) Approve the addition of 1 limited hourly temporary part-time position to the Police Department for a period of 18 months. The position would serve as Coordinator of Homeland Security and Community Outreach.

BACKGROUND
One of the Council’s top 3 priorities for 2006 is disaster preparedness. As part of this effort, staff has worked on a variety of initiatives during the year relating to disaster planning and preparation. In addition to monthly Emergency Preparedness Steering Committee meetings, staff has created a Pandemic Avian Flu working group that has focused specifically on the City’s response to a pandemic flu disaster. The group has focused on five key elements of local government pandemic flu preparedness: continuity planning; policies and procedures; employee education/outreach; procurement/stockpiling; and community education/outreach. Staff from the City, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), Palo Alto Medical Reserve Corps, Palo Alto Area Red Cross, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, and the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health have all been involved in the planning efforts. A summary of these efforts follows.

Continuity Plans: Each City department has developed a plan for continued delivery of core services with a reduced number of employees. The assumption is that up to 30% of the workforce will be unavailable in a pandemic flu situation. The plans include identifying critical functions/operations, essential personnel, essential facilities, non-essential functions that can be suspended and related reassignment of personnel, critical functions that can be performed via telecommuting, and equipment and supplies that should be stockpiled to ensure staff can conduct and deliver essential services.
**Policies and Procedures:** This subcommittee has identified City policies and procedures that will need to be created and/or amended to address the special circumstances of an influenza pandemic. The outcome of this work will most likely be one policy, encompassing several issue areas, that will be temporarily implemented during a pandemic. Staff from Human Resources, the City Attorney’s Office and the Police Department have been the key members of this subcommittee. Once this work is complete, staff will incorporate discussions of the work into employee trainings tentatively scheduled for early 2007.

**Employee education/outreach:** The scope of this subcommittee includes educating City staff about the pandemic influenza and the City’s preparedness plans. To date, the City has hosted four training sessions for employees featuring medical professionals from Stanford University and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation. Approximately 250 employees have attended the training. Several larger operating departments (Police, Fire, Utilities) will be incorporating this training into their regularly scheduled staff meetings/trainings. A second set of trainings will occur in early 2007 on staff policies and procedures in the event of a pandemic flu.

**Procurement/Stockpiling:** An interdepartmental group is preparing a plan for procurement of supplies and materials in the event of a reduction in supply availability, particularly as it relates to pandemic flu supplies. As part of this effort, staff is also evaluating the City’s existing disaster supply resources for all hazards with the assistance of a firm hired by the Police Department that specializes in this planning. Attachment A provides a sample of the worksheet being used for this process. The group has also discussed stockpiling supplies for the greater Palo Alto community.

**Community education/outreach:** The purpose of this subcommittee is, with City Council leadership, to deliver a series of presentations for neighborhood, business, nonprofit, and school groups and the general public that include an overview on the pandemic influenza, how community members can prepare themselves, and the City’s preparedness plan. The sessions were held in late October/early November and were well attended by the community. The Media Center will replay one of the sessions over the next couple of months. Additionally, the City is taking the lead in distributing 30,000 guides on pandemic flu preparedness developed by the County Department of Public Health. These guides have already been distributed to every family in the school district, and are in all public City facilities.

**DISCUSSION**

The next steps in the City’s disaster planning efforts focus on two of the areas described above: stockpiling/procurement and community education/outreach. Staff would like to receive the Council’s input on the additional initiatives planned in these two areas.

**Stockpiling/Procurement:** As mentioned above, staff has focused its efforts on enhancing the City’s emergency supplies as necessary for a pandemic flu. The working group has also discussed the City’s ability to stockpile and distribute supplies for the greater Palo Alto community. Staff currently believes that the supplies necessary for City staff to respond to a pandemic flu can be procured given existing resources. The schedule for obtaining the pandemic
flu supplies will be accelerated for this fiscal year so that more of the supplies are on hand at any one time. Once the disaster supply planning firm mentioned above has finished its work, staff will evaluate any deficient areas and assess whether additional financial resources are necessary for all-hazard disaster supplies.

The staff team, along with input from the County Health Department, has discussed the issue of stockpiling supplies for the community, especially protective masks. With respect to the issue of protective masks, staff recommends that the City not stockpile these for community members. For protective masks to be effective, they need to be fit-tested specifically for the person utilizing the mask, making City efforts to stockpile challenging. Staff will continue to work with the County Health Department on any additional recommendations they have for stockpiling community supplies and will return to the Council in the future if resources are necessary to move forward with this type of effort. Staff will be moving forward with further development of a community education effort to enhance neighborhood preparedness (see discussion below on community outreach). This effort will most likely include recommendations to the community about disaster supplies.

Community education/outreach: Two key components of disaster planning are coordination with the community and communication with the City Council/Emergency Standby Council. In a disaster, the City’s resources will be overwhelmed and it will be critical for members of the community to work together on response and recovery efforts. It is also critical that the City Council provide leadership in the community during a disaster. The ability of the Council to provide the link between the community and staff during a disaster will be crucial in making resource allocation and policy decisions.

To this end, the City has entered into an agreement with Andy Coe for preparation of the disaster communication plan and protocols for the City Council and Emergency Standby Council. Attachment B outlines the scope of services that he will provide to the City. The scope of work is within the City Manager’s contracting authority and funding for the agreement ($25,000) will come from salary savings within the existing City Manager’s department budget.

Recommendation:
1) Approve the addition of 1 limited hourly part-time position to the Police Department for a period of 18 months – To further enhance the City’s community education and outreach plans, staff recommends adding this position. The position would serve as Coordinator of Homeland Security and Community Outreach and will focus heavily on outreach to neighborhoods and neighborhood preparedness. This might include working with the Palo Alto Neighborhoods (PAN) group on a block captain approach to disaster preparedness. The position would also assist the departments in finalizing their continuity plans. Reserve Police Officer Ken Dueker has been acting in this capacity since early October.
RESOURCE IMPACT

The elements of this report that have resource impacts include: the addition of 1 temporary part-time position in the Police Department for 18 months and use of salary savings within the City Manager’s department budget to fund the disaster communication consultant.

Funding for the 18 month temporary position is currently available within the Police Department budget given the vacancies within the department. Based on current available salary savings, staff does not anticipate needing additional funding to cover the addition of this temporary position. Should additional resources be required, staff will request them as part of the mid year budget.

Staff will be utilizing salary savings within the City Manager’s department budget to fund the $25,000 contract for the disaster communication consultant. Given that disaster preparedness is one of the top three Council priorities for this year, staff supports this reallocation of existing budget resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This is not a project requiring environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Attachment A: Procurement/Stockpiling Inventory Worksheet
Attachment B: Scope of Services – Andy Coe (Disaster Communication Consultant)

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