

6.5 Community Engagement and Outreach

Community Partner Engagement Summary

October 2021

In the summer and fall of 2021, Clackamas County hosted four (4) meetings with community partners to inform updates to the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). This document summarizes those meetings and how feedback will be incorporated in this update cycle, or otherwise addressed.

Goals of Engagement

The goal of community engagement was to understand the capacity that partners have to respond to community needs during a disaster, and identify areas where the county might leverage resources or strengthen existing capacity within organizations to improve response efforts. Meetings were designed to capture information from organizations that have worked with the county during recent disasters, to better understand how organizations supported their community members, and identify improvements in coordination between the county's response efforts. Strategies for improving coordination with community partners would be incorporated into the 2022 Emergency Operations Plan update.

Methods

The EOP Project Team hosted virtual meetings, asking community partners to engage in open dialogue around specific questions related to their experiences responding to community needs during recent emergencies. Meetings were organized by the Project Manager, and facilitated by two Faith Leaders, who have significant experience in disaster response and preparedness in Clackamas County. The list below include the meeting dates, descriptions of meeting goals, and intended outcomes of engagement.

June 9, 2021: Community Leaders Meeting

Clackamas County Community Planning Organization and Hamlet Chairs received a briefing on the EOP and how their feedback on the wildfires could be included in the EOP update and EOC procedures.

Sept. 14, 2021: Community- and Faith-Based Organizations

First of two opportunities for community-based and faith-based organizations to inform the county on their operations during an emergency, how they coordinate with the county, and suggest needed improvements.

Sept. 21, 2021: Community- and Faith-Based Organizations

Second opportunity for community-based and faith-based organizations to inform the county on their operations during an emergency, how they coordinate with the county, and suggest needed improvements.

Sept. 28, 2021: Cities and Special Districts

Clarify roles and responsibilities of cities and special districts during a disaster and capture in EOP. Discuss methods to improve coordination between the county, cities and special districts, which lead to clarity on Liaison Officer Roles in the EOP.

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Invitees and Attendance

The EOP Project Team coordinated with representatives from Public Health and the Liaison Section working within the COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center to identify community-based and faith-based organizations that have collaborated with the county to deliver services to residents during a disaster. A total of 22 organizations were invited to participate in the engagement meetings, and 16 organizations attended.

Key Findings

This section presents a short summary of key findings that emerged in all community engagement sessions. Findings are summarized into three themes that appeared during each meeting. Each theme

Communication:

Communication is critical to conducting efficient and effective response efforts. It reduces the potential for duplication of effort, saving valuable time, and is key to effective delegation. The following issues were raised related to communication gaps and suggestions for improvements.

- Gap in translation services and bilingual communications with non-English speaking organizations in the moment during emergencies.
- Partners need faster, more direct dissemination of information during emergencies.
- Organizations want a point of contact at the county to communicate with during an emergency. One meeting, “coordination with the county is confusing”

Relationship Strengthening:

When relationships are established before emergencies, everyone involved has a better sense of each other’s capabilities and can increase their individual and collective capabilities. The following topics were discussed in relation to strengthening relationships.

- Partners discussed that during recent emergencies, a county representative that was different from their usual point of contact connected with them about response efforts. By strengthening relationships with organizations, and building trust, organizations might better understand how county department work together to meet the needs of the whole community and vice versa.
- Relationship building/strengthening between community-based organizations and the public, and also between county department staff is important. Community partners suggested relationships could be fostered before an incident occurs with more consistent outreach during blue skies times.

Capacity Building:

Strengthening the capacities of local organizations is a crucial step for improving resilience in our communities. Supporting organizations in developing solutions based on their unique assets and resources will increase their capacity to adapt and innovate, when it comes to emergency preparedness and response planning. The following comments were shared in relation to capacity building.

- A few organizations reported that they were familiar with how to respond to their community’s needs during an emergency, while some organizations shared that recent disasters in 2020/2021 were their first time playing this role. Some could not stand up resources as quickly as they needed to. Organizations had varying levels of ability to set up and respond.
- Organizations emphasized the importance of conducting pre-event exercises with CBOs/FBOs/Cities, Special Districts.
- Pre-planning together with organizations, so they know what resources are out there, who to contact and how to get those resources. Also encourage community based organizations to become familiar with each other, and build relationships between staff at organizations so they have people they can reach out to in addition to the county.

Incorporating Feedback

The feedback listed above from community partners was included in the EOP in the following ways:

- Establishing the Liaison Officer as described and intended in National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) to support cities and special district needs.
- Clarifying roles for cities and special districts.

The remaining feedback is beyond the scope and specificity of the Emergency Operations Plan. Therefore, the county will address this feedback in additional operations plans and procedure documents that support the EOP in addition to planning practice exercises with community partners. Collaboration with the soon to be formed Emergency Preparedness Council and the anticipated Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) will also address the feedback.

Gaps in Engagement

Future coordination and engagement is needed with partner organizations that support community members who live with disabilities, communities of color, and other historically underserved communities. Disaster Management staff will continue to coordinate with the county's Office of Equity and Inclusion and Social Services on how to ensure these organizations are represented in emergency planning.

Next Steps

The county will review the updated EOP with exercises and real emergencies to test coordination and lines of authority as outlined in the framework. Promulgation of this EOP update is scheduled for March 2022. The EOP will be reviewed every two years, and formally adopted and promulgated every four years.

The county will continue to coordinate with community partners to exercise and revise the coordination outlined in the EOP. The newly formed Emergency Preparedness Council is expected to launch in Spring 2022, near the time of EOP promulgation. The Emergency Preparedness Council, comprised of both public sector officials and community members, will be instrumental in elevating the importance of updating and maintaining the Emergency Operations Plan. Furthermore, Disaster Management plans to facilitate the development of a Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) group. A COAD is comprised of community- and faith-based organizations, who coordinate before, during, and after disasters, to ensure the communities they serve are prepared, and have resources they need after a disaster.

Communities are dynamic, and change is constant. As we continue experiencing dramatic changes to our environmental, social, and economic vulnerability, it is important to continue regular engagement with community organizations. Stronger relationships with our community partners will allow us to understand resource availability, stay informed of staff turnover and changes in institutional knowledge, and recognize changes in capacity of organizations to respond in emergencies.

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Invitation to Community Partners

Dear Partners:

Thank you for your engagement and services over the past several months as we have endured a pandemic, wildfires, ice storm and two record breaking heatwaves. Many of you worked alongside us as we served our community through such emergencies.

When responding to emergencies, the county is guided by its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). This plan outlines how the county will respond to multiple hazards and assigns county departments responsibility for specific functions of emergency preparedness and response required to protect county residents. Responding to emergencies is a community effort, and partnerships with cities, special districts, and community-based- and faith-based organizations play a crucial role in supporting residents during an emergency and aiding them in the recovery process.

We are currently updating our Emergency Operations Plan and need your input. We would like to invite you to one of two Virtual Workshops scheduled **September 14 and September 21** to better understand how you serve your community, how you communicate with your community, and how you coordinate with the county during and in advance of emergencies. Ultimately, the workshop objective is to understand what you need from the county in order to better serve your community in times of disaster. We will take this feedback to strengthen our Emergency Operations Plan to better serve you and the communities you serve in future emergencies.

Please “Accept” one of the two meeting invitations to RSVP for the workshop. Your input is extremely valuable to this process, and we look forward to your attendance and hearing your feedback.

Invitees and Attendance

Attendance	Org	Name	Location	Contact
9/14	CBO	Red Cross	ORVOAD	Nick Widmer
9/14	CBO	Salvation Army	ORVOAD	Captain Mike O’Brien
9/14	CBO	LoveOne	Oregon City	Brandi Johnson
9/14	CBO	Northwest Family Services	Portland	Jaqueline Vargas
9/14	FBO	Mennonite Disaster Services	ORVOAD	John Colvin
9/14	FBO	Adventist Community Services	Gladstone	Andy Villanueva
9/14	FBO	Oak Grove United Methodist Church	Milwaukie	Pastor Heather Riggs
9/14	FBO	Hope City Church	Milwaukie	Beka Overby
9/14	SD	Clackamas County Fire District #1	Clackamas County	Gregg Ramirez
9/14 9/21	CBO	Clackamas Service Center	Portland	Debra Mason

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9/14 9/21	FBO	Southern Baptist Disaster Relief-NW	ORVOAD	Dave Hillison
9/21	CBO	Bridging Cultures	Canby	Olga Jimenez
9/21	CBO	Trauma Intervention Program Northwest	Portland	June Vining Jordan Johnson
9/21	FBO	Foothills Community Church	Molalla	Cecily Rose
9/21	FBO	Iglesia Del Dios Vivo Columna Y Apoyo De La Verdad "La Luz Del Mundo"	Canby	Olga Jimenez
9/21	FBO	The Molalla Church Of The Nazarene	Molalla	Leota Childress
Invited	CBO	LoveInc	Oregon City	Joan Jones
Invited	CBO	Colton Helping Hands Inc.	Colton	Donna Fix
Invited	CBO	Catholic Charities of Oregon	Portland	Travis Phillips
Invited	CBO	Father's Heart Ministry	Oregon City	Robin Schmidt
Invited	CBO	AntFarm	Sandy	Nunpa
Invited	CBO	The Canby Center	Canby	Steve Nelson
Invited	FBO	Canby Hispanic Foursquare Church	Canby	Rene Bogue

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Community Partner Agenda

Meeting: EOP Workshop | Community Partners

Date: September 14 and 21, 2021

Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Goals of Engagement:

To share the framework the county uses to respond to emergencies, set realistic expectations about the capacity that partners have to respond during a disaster, and understand where the county can support.

- Consult with community partners about the county’s preparedness and response efforts.
- Learn how partners respond to the needs of their community.
- Understand how the county can improve coordination internally and externally to set realistic expectations for supporting, strengthening, or leveraging existing capacity in their response efforts.

Time	Agenda Item	Description	Outcomes
(11:30-11:45)	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Organization • What has been your role/your organization’s role in emergency response? 	All feel welcome. Meet community partners.
(11:45-12:00)	Overview: Clackamas County Emergency Operations Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the EOP 	Understand how community partners’ feedback will be incorporated into the EOP.
(12:00-12:15)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your organization respond to the needs of the community during a disaster? 	Identify areas of support community partners provide. Identify populations that are being supported by community partners. Where are there gaps?
(12:15-12:30)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your organization coordinate with the county during a disaster? 	Understand existing coordination between community partners and the county during emergencies, and identify how coordination could be improved.
(12:30-12:45)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you communicate with your community? 	Understand how the county could support enhanced communications before, during, and after emergencies.
(12:45-1:00)	Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) • Timeline for completing the EOP update. 	Community partners learn about engaging with a COAD to further enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

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Cities and Special Districts Agenda

Meeting: EOP Workshop | Cities and Special Districts
 Date: September 28, 2021
 Time: 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Goals of Engagement:

To share the framework the county uses to respond to emergencies, set realistic expectations about the capacity that partners have to respond during a disaster, and understand where the county can support.

- Consult with emergency managers from Cities and Special Districts about the county’s preparedness and response efforts.
- Learn how partners respond to the needs of their community.
- Understand how the county can improve coordination internally and externally to set realistic expectations for supporting, strengthening, or leveraging existing capacity in their response efforts.

Time	Agenda Item	Description	Outcomes
(3:00-3:15)	Overview: Clackamas County Emergency Operations Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the EOP, including any significant changes since the 2017 update. 	Understand how feedback will be incorporated into the EOP.
(3:15-3:30)	Coordination with Cities and Special Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Base Plan of the EOP currently does not outline coordination with cities or special districts. Our discussion will focus on identifying high-level elements of coordination between cities/special districts and the county, and acknowledge them in the EOP. 	Identify areas of support community partners provide. Identify populations that are being supported by community partners. Where are there gaps?
(3:30-3:45)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What elements of coordination with the county are helpful to you during an emergency? 	Identify existing coordination between cities/special districts and the county during emergencies.
(3:45-4:00)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your current expectations related to communication and coordination with the county before, during, and after emergencies? 	Identify expectations of the county’s coordination with cities/special districts.
(4:00-4:15)	Open Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the future, how would you like to engage/share information with the county before, during, after emergencies? What current coordination could be improved? 	Identify strategies for improving coordination.
(4:15-4:30)	Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) • Timeline for completing the EOP update. 	Community partners learn about engaging with a COAD to further enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.