

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BRIEFING PAPER

Topic: Jefferson County Evacuation Annex

Presented by: Brian Keating, Fire Management Officer, JCSO

Date: 10/22/2024

For Information

For Discussion/Board Direction

Consent to
Place on Business/
Hearing Agenda

Issue:

The Sheriff's Office is requesting adoption of the Jefferson County Evacuation Annex (EA) to the County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) by the Board of County Commissioners. The EA is an annex to the CEMP which was completed in 2021 and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on April 19, 2022.

Background:

Evacuations deal with the movement of people and animals from an area at risk to a safe area when hazards and emergency situations necessitate such action. The goal of evacuation planning throughout Jefferson County is to maximize the preservation of life while limiting the number of people that must evacuate and the travel distance to a safe refuge. In accordance with County policy and state statute, the County Emergency Services Section is responsible for stewarding the community's resilience in all-hazard emergencies through bolstering its core capabilities within their respective mission areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Additionally, evacuation is a component required by the 2022 Colorado State Forest Service minimum standards for developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). The Evacuation Annex incorporates the hazard and vulnerability information in the CEMP, County Hazard Mitigation Plan, County Transportation Master Plan, and County Major Thoroughfare Plan.

Discussion:

The EA was drafted as part of the Together Jeffco process and the County Emergency Manager with the Sheriff's Office Emergency Services Section worked with a contractor (Michal Baker International) to complete the document. The EA is a non-regulatory document and provides overarching guidance for the development of, in support of, or to supplement information provided in the evacuation plans prepared and maintained by local jurisdictions within Jefferson County.

Purpose of the EA:

The purpose of the 2024 Jefferson County EA:

- The Evacuation Annex applies to the entire area within Jefferson County, including all incorporated jurisdictions and special districts.

- Sets forth emergency operations guidelines, procedures, strategies and organizational structures to carry out a coordinated evacuation event.
- Identifies roles and responsibilities for all-hazards evacuation and re-entry operations.
- Provides hazard specific considerations, general evacuation transportation considerations, evacuation route capacities, and considerations for people that have access and functional needs, which includes but is not limited to people that identify with a disability.

Process of the EA:

The EA planning process was multifaceted and collaborative. It included consultation and input from multiple county parties including municipalities, fire protection districts, law enforcement agencies, county emergency management agencies and others. Collaboration and input helped develop and refine the processes, roles and responsibilities that the EA developed. Throughout the process, the Jefferson County Wildfire Commission was also briefed and had the opportunity to comment on various components of the EA across five different meetings.

Members of the public also participated in providing input and reviewing components of the plan as they were developed through the Together Jeffco Community Engagement events (8), online mapping platform and surveys, and through partner and agency outreach efforts and meetings. Feedback received was used to shape and develop the EA update and throughout the process, input from the citizens of Jefferson County has helped to identify broad evacuation planning needs, concerns and challenges that face our Jefferson County residents. As part of the draft EA review process, an internal county department review of the document was completed with feedback incorporated into the plan. County departments in this effort included:

- Sheriff's Office Emergency Services Section
- Planning and Zoning
- Transportation and Engineering
- Road and Bridge
- Public Health
- Open Space
- Building and Safety

Finally, members of the public had the opportunity to review the draft plan and provide comments from September 9-September 22. All comments and questions were compiled and reviewed by the EA Project Coordinator and Michael Baker International and were incorporated to add clarity and understanding with no major substantive issues identified.

The EA will be fully integrated into the County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and evacuation coordination and operations updated based on the recommendations. The EA will be monitored and updated as part of future regular CEMP updates.

Fiscal Impact: yes no

Revenue Limits Impact: yes no

SPA Review: N/A

County Attorney Review: Kurtis Behn, 10/11/2024

Facilities Review: N/A

BIT Review: N/A

Fleet Review: N/A

Human Resources Review (new FTE only): N/A

Recommendations:

The Emergency Services Section recommends the Board of County Commissioners place the Jefferson County Evacuation Annex (to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan) on a future consent agenda for approval.

Originator: Nate Whittington, Emergency Manager, Sheriff's Office

Contacts for Additional Information:

Nate Whittington, Emergency Manager, Sheriff's Office Emergency Services Section

njwhittington@jeffco.us

303-271-4947