


**Memorandum**

**Date:** November 6, 2007  
**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Suja Lowenthal, Second District   
**Subject:** Shoreline Area Emergency Preparedness Plan

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**BACKGROUND:**

The concept for a Shoreline Area Emergency Preparedness Plan originally arose from reviewing the risks of a disaster striking the Aquarium of the Pacific and its neighbors. It soon became apparent that the Aquarium, Convention Center, Shoreline Village and the Pike dining and entertainment areas would face some unique natural and man-made disaster risks.

These risks are the result of three basic facts. First, all the land in the Pike area is fill land, which means that in the event of a major earthquake affecting this region there is a high potential for liquefaction problems due to soil conditions. Secondly, the close proximity to the Port of Long Beach means that any major event at the Port will directly or indirectly impact the shoreline area. Third, the fact that the shoreline area often has a large attendance, is fairly open and easily accessible lend it to being a potential terrorism target, either directly or indirectly.

Consequently, given the geology, the businesses in the area and today's terrorist realities, one can appreciate the unique characteristics of the shoreline area and their need for special disaster planning considerations. Without adequate pre-disaster planning and preparation, the risks of serious human, animal and property damage only increase.

In discussing these issues with some of the local businesses, it became apparent that they were not prepared or communally informed as to how to respond to a major disaster that might affect this area. The Aquarium decided to take the lead and formed the Shoreline Disaster Preparedness Group.

The Group began meeting in March of 2007. Except for one of the monthly meetings, all have been held at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Attendance at these meetings has not been very representative of the local community and has been less than what is needed to realistically reach the goal of disaster preparedness

for this area. There appears to be a sense that “others” will take care of their needs. This refers to an unrealistic reliance on the City and related resources, which will be hard pressed to provide initial or ongoing medical and safety services should a citywide disaster occur.

Based on capacity at the various venues and businesses, as many as 20,000 people may be at risk in the shoreline area should there be a large-scale disaster. Therefore, I believe that we must develop an emergency disaster plan for this key tourist and resident destination before a major disaster strikes. The work we put into emergency pre-planning and education for businesses, city departments and venues will save lives and maximize city resources. The Aquarium of the Pacific is willing to be the coordinator of a plan and its post-disaster execution, but assistance from the City Manager and appropriate departments is requested to produce a broad-based approach involving the Convention Center (SMG), Shoreline Village and the Pike area (DDR). Such an approach can help realize the goal of disaster preparedness, response and recovery by way of common methods beneficial to all parties concerned.

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

Respectfully request the City Manager to work with the Aquarium of the Pacific, Port of Long Beach, SMG, DDR and other entities to develop a coordinated Emergency Disaster Preparedness plan for the shoreline area.

Request the City Manager assist with communicating the plan once it is developed and identify an appropriate city contact in the event of an emergency and for the purpose of ongoing planning.