

Experience and Vision

1. Why did you want this job? What do you want to accomplish during your tenure? How will you know if you're successful?

I am very passionate about emergency management, having a positive impact, and helping people.

There are many components necessary for emergency management to be successful and I believe that Seattle government has those:

- A commitment to racial and social justice – values of Inclusion, learning, accountability and stewardship
- A talented and committed OEM Staff
- Belief that government works best when it works collaboratively with the community it serves
- Diversity of thought is valued and encouraged

Seattle is one of the great cities of the world and is known for being innovative – that's exciting! Being part of Seattle government and working toward building community resilience every day is exciting.

I believe that my skills and experience working with so many organizations outside of government and public safety has allowed me to learn how to listen to what a group values and needs and then connect that to emergency management principles, which is really about building community resilience.

Emergency Management is connected to everything and I am good at helping people understand that connection and why we should be partners.

In the short term, I am thankful that I am part off the team that will be deploying vaccines throughout Seattle and in making sure all who are eligible and want the vaccine have access to it.

Long term, I am committed to working with my colleagues in city departments, community leaders, and the private sector to build community resilience, which means working together to address all of the issues that are challenging for daily life. Building resilience will require OEM is able to:

- Build and maintain successful partnerships to address mitigation projects that keep people safe, such as, continued awareness of Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings and ways to address their vulnerabilities.
- Engage with community leaders to reach underserved populations, those with limited English proficiency, and other groups with access and functional needs (AFN) to listen to their needs and then partner to help address barriers to building resilience.

- Work with the OEM Team and city departments for reaccreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) which requires validation that all city departments have a role and are engaged in emergency management.
- Continue to engage with city department directors and their teams to plan, prepare for, mitigate and respond to all hazards which may impact Seattle, through a comprehensive training and exercise plan, and the implementation of that plan.
- Response to all emergency incidents with trained OEM staff and in collaboration with the city's operational departments to help those impacted. Leverage the response coordination capabilities with our OEM staff and key partners through the work of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- Address improvement plan actions resulting from the After-Action Review following incidents and exercises.
- Work with the city's Recovery Director and team to help Seattle return to some state of normal not just from COVID, but from all incidents impacting the city. Using that work to build on the foundational work of the City's Disaster Recovery Framework and the Reimagine Seattle work.
- Continue partnerships with Regional Emergency Management Directors strengthening our commitment to each other and enhancement of regional resilience.

2. How has your experience in Bellevue prepared you for this job?

My experience in Bellevue provided me with the opportunity to get to know the issues and challenges in emergency management in the Region. I worked with neighboring jurisdictions and have strong partnerships with regional emergency management directors. I served on several regional committees and Boards, including the Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) which advises on King County Council, the WA 211 Board, the Critical Infrastructure working group (a public-private partnership). These partnerships are critical for successful emergency management activities.

3. What differences do you anticipate between leading Seattle OEM and your role in Bellevue?

Bellevue is a 51% minority majority city, so the main difference is that Seattle is a much larger city. Size usually means complexity which means there are more distinct communities that make up Seattle and have diverse needs and perspectives.

4. Please describe any lessons you've learned as an emergency management professional from the COVID-19 pandemic. Have you noted any opportunities for improvement at the local level?

The problems, issues and challenges that people face from systemic racism have been exacerbated by the pandemic. So, access to education and childcare, use of technology, healthcare access and housing, employment opportunities -- all things drastically impacted by COVID -- are disproportionately effecting BIPOC communities. This means for emergency management that we must be acutely aware of how our efforts to assist people will also be affected, as daily life activities and support systems are drastically impacted. COVID has re-emphasized what we already knew about messaging, and that is that only using technology as a message delivery system is inadequate and does not reach all communities. Nothing takes the place of face-to-face contact and that isn't possible now. Our use of community partnerships and culture brokers for messaging and to connect people to resources is even

more important than it was previously. COVID has also required that we do a better job of explaining to people what authority public health has, what a public health emergency is and how emergency managers work with public health experts on a regular basis. It would be helpful for local jurisdictions to do more exercises with public health scenarios, especially scenarios that simulate going on for a long period of time. Local government also has the opportunity to help the public understand how important mental health is and that it also impacts people's ability to be resilient. The long length of the pandemic has taken a toll of everyone and it is all of local government's responsibility to recognize that so that collectively we can help each other and continue to support new ways to connect with others.

5. Do you have any professional experience in responding to or recovering from a major disaster, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, how will that experience inform your work at Seattle OEM?

I worked in emergency management in California for over 20 years, where I responded to many large-scale, federally declared disasters. My experience in emergency operations centers for local and state government agencies includes responding to wildland fires, large flood events, inclement weather causing mass power outages and animal disease outbreaks. All responses were multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction incidents lasting 7 days or more. In each of those incidents I served as the Planning Chief responsible for planning support operations to first responders, or as an Agency representative, or as the EOC Director responsible for the entire management of the emergency operations center (EOC). That work has provided me with multiple experiences of using multi-agency coordination through use of the Incident Command System (ICS) and experience developing and implementing Action Plans. These are the standard emergency management roles and responsibilities which adhere to the National ICS standard and would be of benefit to any emergency management organization, as we all adhere to those standards. In those roles I had the opportunity to work with myriad agencies, departments, and disciplines which required that I spend time listening to understand all those involved in the incident's mission and perspective on priorities. All of this work will be of benefit to my work in Seattle.

6. What opportunities do you see from creation of an independent OEM instead of reporting through the SPD chain of command?

It's exciting for OEM to become independent for the first time in its existence. Independent OEMs with direct reporting to the executive are able to directly tackle issues without layers of approval. Emergency Management is the core function that brings disparate disciplines together to address problems and identify solutions to consequences needing collaboration and coordination. We know how to bring people together and facilitate discussions, while bringing all voices to the table. We support first responders and work with departments and partners in responding to the impacts to our community. Emergency Management work requires that we bring together many departments, agencies, and disciplines in order to provide the most comprehensive and efficient response to anything that impacts people lives and requires multiple disciplines to work together. Overall situational awareness is possible when each discipline's mission and actions are understood. Emergency Management is also focused on community building through understanding all that community is vulnerable to so that we can focus on preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. First responders (like police and

fire) focus on actions immediately following some incident. EM focuses on actions needed before, during, and after an incident.

7. What will be your advice/recommendations to an incoming new mayor in your first briefing?

First, we'll continue our practice of briefing the new Mayor and their leadership team on the response role before they assume office, in case there is an emergency during the transition. From there, it is important for the incoming Mayor to be oriented to the citywide emergency response capability providing confidence on operational plans in place, department operational systems, trained and capable personnel, and policy-level processes and mechanisms. My advice will be for the Mayor to leverage their department directors through the Emergency Executive Board who assist in emergency policy advisement and support routine exercises to help build response muscle memory.

It will be important for the new Mayor to understand OEM's role with respect to COVID response/recovery, the current priorities at that time for OEM and the region, and an update on regional programs and grant work, such as the Catastrophic Planning grant, and the part Seattle plays in that work.

8. What do you see as the City Council's role with respect to emergency management? How will you ensure that you work effectively with the City Council.

OEM has appreciated City Council's support to our citywide emergency management over the years. We will continue to provide you briefings on emergency management efforts and sharing our Strategic Plan intentions. We will also continue to have the Council approve key emergency management plans as well as important grant funding which covers the salaries and benefits of three of our 14 staff. During the disaster response, we value your assistance in sharing key information and emergency communications to your constituents. Also, during and following a disaster, your role is vital in taking action on emergency proclamations and approving emergency budget needs as we work to recover our community. All of you are our force-multipliers in sharing preparedness information and helping to make our community more resilient. I am committed to information sharing and keeping you informed as we address annual priorities and respond to emergencies as they arise.

OEM Role

9. What can OEM and the City do better to build resiliency to endure and recover from disasters?

OEM and the city can continue to seek out groups and individuals to whom we are not currently connected. Then listen to their needs, challenges and perspectives to understand how we can help them strengthen their community, group, or family. By focusing on strengthening people's abilities to deal with daily struggles; whether access to housing, education, jobs, or healthcare, we will also make them more resilient and better able to build resilience and recover from disasters. Strong communities, groups, and families are more resilient which means they are better able to withstand impacts from disasters. This includes a focus on underrepresented groups and those who may simply be unaware of what resources are available, how to access them, and what hazards they are vulnerable to.

10. Given that the City's response to the currently declared emergencies (i.e., homelessness and the COVID-19 pandemic) are not being managed out of OEM, what, if anything, could or should OEM contribute to addressing the response to and/or recovery from these emergencies?

Our Seattle Hazards Identification & Vulnerability Assessment (SHIVA) has identified that the city can face upwards of 18 different hazards. Being prepared and able to respond to such an array of hazards requires our ongoing attention and preparation efforts. We need to address emergency plans, trainings, exercises, prepare and educate the whole community, take steps to mitigate hazard impacts, and maintaining the operational readiness of the city and the Emergency Operations Center. All these efforts require our consistent engagement with departments, agencies, community and regional, state and federal partners.

Emergency Management, while not the lead for these aforementioned emergencies, is actively working with the Departments who are managing their work and responding. OEM provides critical information across and between Departments while maintaining the large situational awareness operational picture of work being done. This operational picture can be used to help identify where the gaps may be.

Recovery, as seen with COVID, is a significant endeavor and leverages similar partners and many other non-response stakeholders. As we have seen in 2020 with multiple emergency events, its critical to maintain a response capability and also dedicate focused resources for recovery.

Recovery requires cross departmental work as well and will build upon the progress made prior to moving into that work.

11. Do you see any strategic opportunities for the City to rebuild to a better place, post-pandemic?

Rather than life after COVID, for a while we will most likely be figuring out how to make life better with COVID. I see strategic opportunities in the following areas:

- Continuing to reimagine how we connect with people outside of the use of technology – and avoid ignoring the digital divide that will continue to impact certain communities.
- Rethinking urban planning and increasing access to all public spaces, basic services, and amenities
- Continuing work on inclusivity with focus on BIPOC businesses and communities
- Reimagining public transportation options
- Providing robust and widespread access to remote learning or providing of options for educational access in partnership with the private sector.
- Addressing how to provide services in conjunction with public health for those without healthcare options.

12. How can OEM improve the City's resiliency to climate change impacts?

Climate change will cause more intense storms, frequent heavy precipitation, heat waves, drought, extreme flooding, and higher sea levels which could significantly alter the types and magnitudes of hazards we face. Over the last few years OEM has worked with several

departments (Office of Sustainability & Environment, Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle Parks & Recreation, Seattle Fire Department, etc.) collaborating on plans and efforts to address the impacts of climate change. OEM has explored and faced ways to lessen the impacts of wildfire smoke, King Tides, excessive heat, and Pineapple Expresses. OEM can improve the City's resilience by engaging City Departments in training and exercising to prepare for, mitigate, respond, and recover from more severe disasters and emergencies. Exercises with severe incident scenarios will also be effective with elected officials, community groups, and with the private sector. Obtaining funding from FEMA for mitigation projects for multiple City Departments will lessen the impact of more severe incidents. This requires OEM to work with state and federal partners to ensure understanding of mitigation grant opportunities and their requirements. Updating Seattle's Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) is a requirement for some grants and provides the City with important information about those incidents we are most vulnerable to, how that vulnerability changes over time, and what impacts are expected so we can prepare appropriately.

Racial Equity

13. How will you address racial equity in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a disaster?

Racial equity is best addressed by understanding how systemic racism has adversely impacted BIPOC communities, making them less resilient and more susceptible to severe impacts from all hazards. This means that BIPOC communities will need different things to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. That understanding comes from engaging with communities through trusted community leaders, using Community Safety Ambassadors, and teaching courses that are meaningful for each group's needs. It means learning about and listening for what a community believes is important and meeting them where they are and not expecting them to come to us. Community preparedness is much more effective than trying to get each individual person to spend time preparing. Emergency Management is most successful in helping communities prepare when time is spent understanding the challenges and issues they face daily. All of the issues BIPOC communities face; access to education, housing, employment, healthcare, and food insecurity make them more vulnerable to disaster impacts, and disasters and emergencies exacerbate those issues. OEM's partnership with other departments to address these daily life issues allows us to be more successful at focusing our preparedness issues on what will make the most sense for a community. Building resilience starts with first addressing those things that a community struggles with every day.

14. What steps have you taken to deepen your understanding of racial equity and how it intersects with emergency management?

I have engaged with the Institute for Diversity & Inclusion in Emergency Management to learn from and connect with those committed to diversity and inclusion. The mission of I-DIEM is to serve as a resource and an advocate for the value of diversity and inclusion in emergency management (EM). I-DIEM leads efforts to increase representation of women and people of color in the field of emergency management, including in positions of leadership, through awareness and education. I-DIEM serves as the conduit for research on diversity and inclusion, social equity and the practical application of equitable EM practices to improve outcomes and

build resilience. The focus is on humanity, and the vision supports the empowerment of marginalized communities within all phases of the disaster management cycle.

I participated in the Leadership Eastside program to learn adaptive leadership techniques and work with a diverse cohort and campaign team. My campaign team work focused on the supporting and embedding of racial equity and social justice concepts and principles into the curriculum and into the work we engaged in with community partners.

15. What do you see as the most effective tools to address racial equity in the field of emergency management?

In the short term, engaging with Culture brokers, community leaders, and neighborhood groups to understand how best to help everyone build resilience.

In the longer term, recruit, mentor, and train BIPOC people to enter the field of emergency management so the field more closely represents the people they serve and work with.

16. How did you incorporate racial equity into your work with the City of Bellevue? Please provide specific examples.

To best reach BIPOC communities, my team and I designed a three-pronged approach:

- We first worked on a needs assessment, by designing and disseminating a survey to ascertain awareness and understanding of emergency preparedness by all communities in Bellevue. This data gave us a starting place for outreach and development of materials and plans that were tailored specifically to a neighborhood or community, and what they needed. We were then able to initiate contact with individuals within communities and help them understand their vulnerability to hazards and provide guidance in line with community needs to build both personal and community resiliency.
- The development of networks with Community leaders was the next step. Seeking out Community Leaders who worked with BIPOC populations and other vulnerable groups to help with both messaging and understanding what communities needed with regard to preparedness. We engaged leaders from the Eastside Immigrant and Refugee Coalition, the Language Academy at the Westminster Chapel (audience here was mostly 1st generation immigrants), the YMCA, and Tzu Chi Disaster Relief organization. (All organizations who focused on BIPOC communities.) These leaders served as culture brokers, the links to groups with different cultural backgrounds or different lived experiences. We then developed a network of community leaders who became our partners for outreach and education specifically targeted to BIPOC and other vulnerable communities.
- The third step was to work with the Bellevue School District to embed emergency management concepts and principles into curriculum. Children are great teachers of their family members. This is extremely helpful for BIPOC communities who may have had difficult or unpleasant experiences with government representatives and so distrust them. (Many attribute the widespread acceptance of the campaigns focused on the dangers of smoking and the importance of recycling to teaching those concepts to children who then influenced their families!) My team and I worked with the high school teachers to sponsor a Community Emergency Response Team Training (CERT)

program. This was a way to teach students who were then excited about preparedness and went home to teach their families disaster preparedness skills. We worked with a special education teacher to develop videos with students and first responders on preparedness topics. The script paired special education students and students from BIPOC communities with first responders to talk about preparedness topics in short videos. Videos would then be uploaded to YouTube, the school district website, and the city's website. (We did not finish the videos as we were interrupted by the COVID stay at home order.)

My team and I designed, developed, and conducted a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Lite* training for Muslim women with all women instructors and staff and adhering to restrictions respectful of the Muslim faith.

(*CERT Lite is a shortened version of the longer 8-week CERT program, designed to make learning disaster preparedness skills more accessible to those who could not commit to an 8-week program.)

We also:

- Designed a CERT Lite program for Tzu Chi Disaster Relief organization and taught it in English and Mandarin.
- Worked with the WA State Community and Technical colleges to recruit students from BIPOC communities to enroll in emergency management courses and learn about emergency management as a profession.
- Provided disaster preparedness and hazard awareness courses to immigrants who had recently relocated to Bellevue.

I was a member of the Employees of Bellevue for Racial and Cultural Equity (EmBRACE) employee resource group to learn about and broaden my understanding of racial and social justice issues.

I presented to an employee resource group on the disproportional impacts of disasters on BIPOC communities due to years of systemic racism.

While not geared specifically to racial equity, I am proud of the work I did in areas that provided accessibility to people of all races who are differently abled:

- My team and I, working with the City of Redmond, co-hosted the full CERT program for differently abled participants, providing ASL translators, tactile translation team support, and using universal design principles, allowing all who were interested, able to take the course and become certified CERT members with disaster response skills.
- Working with the City ADA administrator, we used grant funds to purchase and install wheelchair charging stations in all five Community Centers and at Bellevue City Hall. I also used OEM grant funds to purchase six more wheelchair charging stations and plans were made with private sector partners around the city to install the stations. These stations ensure people are not stranded during peacetime, and are most especially useful when disasters occur so that those in electric wheelchairs are able to evacuate safely.

- My team incorporated universal design principles into emergency management training materials so that those with vision challenges are able to see and use the materials.

17. How do you intend for OEM to work with Seattle’s underrepresented communities, including those with low English proficiency?

Building resilience in any community starts with working to understand what is most important to a community —before asking them to do anything – and seeking to understand, prior to giving people a ‘should’ like “you should be prepared.” Then we can link resilience to what the community feels is important. Resilience is directly related to the ability of a community to stay connected during challenging situations and working together to solve problems. For underrepresented communities, the use of culture brokers (those who are connected to a community and have a relationship with government) can serve as a bridge to make pre-disaster connections with underrepresented communities. Once connection is made, relationships may be forged. It is through those relationships that we understand what a community needs and feels is important and can connect resilience building to those things. OEM recruits and hires Community Safety Ambassadors who are community members who can teach basic disaster preparedness skills (ways to be safer during a disaster such as an earthquake or winter weather), provide 911 outreach and education, and teach hands-only CPR to immigrant, refugee and limited-English-speaking communities. The ideal candidate is a trusted community member, has knowledge of the community they will be training, speaks the same language, identifies and has a sense of service to the community, is comfortable speaking publicly and can demonstrate leadership ability.

Preparedness

18. How will you measure your progress in improving the City’s disaster preparedness?

Preparedness can be measured in a variety of ways:

- a. Continue to follow established practices for conducting after action reviews, identifying gaps in response, and following through with corrective action plans. Even the smallest incident provides us with an opportunity to improve.
- b. Increase the frequency of exercises, particularly multi-departmental exercises. Again, **this lets us make measurable improvements in response based on observed gaps.**
- c. Focus on community skills training: Stop the Bleed, search and rescue, utility control, fire extinguisher use. These skills will save lives during a major emergency.
 - i. # of people reached
 - ii. Pre and post training knowledge
 - iii. The more people that have these skills and the confidence to use them, the better off we all are
- d. Public access to emergency information
 - i. Number of people signed up for Alert Seattle

- ii. Availability of Earthquake Early Warning and communities understanding of that system (may be live as early May 2021)
- iii. Ability to reach people that speak a language other than English with emergency messaging (currently working on pre-translated hazard messaging and partnerships with CBOs to get emergency info out through existing community networks)
- e. An increased diversity of stakeholders/partners that are directly involved in OEM planning efforts
- f. Increasing reach with preparedness messaging to those communities that are likely to be the most impacted (Limited English, low income, seniors, etc.)

19. How did you work with all facets of the community in Bellevue to improve preparedness? What will you do differently in Seattle?

Improving preparedness in any jurisdiction is much the same, the scale of that work is different, depending on the size and complexity of the jurisdiction. The methods I used in Bellevue are applicable to Seattle, the scale is different. I began with developing relationships with Community leaders, faith-based organizations, non-profits and the private sector. Each of these groups provides critical ties to people that make up the community and are often the conduit to reaching underserved populations. Those relationships reveal the strengths and priorities of those groups and also insight into where the gaps in preparedness exist – which is usually tied to lack of knowledge of threats and hazards a community face. Once relationships are established, working with each of these groups to understand their needs and perspectives about how they may engage in the work of preparedness. Using volunteers as a force multiplier for teaching disaster skills, conducting community exercises, and looking for opportunities to engage in and support community preparedness are all components for increasing preparedness. Seeking community input on the plans and strategies that affect them helps the community understand what they are facing, how the government will respond, and how preparedness builds resilience.

20. Has the COVID-19 pandemic left the community less resilient and/or less prepared for a major disaster, such as an earthquake? If so, what will be your near-term steps to bring the city back to pre-COVID preparedness and strengthened resiliency?

The pandemic has impacted every aspect of our society, including disaster resilience. More residents of the city are struggling to feed their families on a day-to-day basis, so we know that more individuals will be in need of assistance after a disaster. All of the issues that the community has been struggling with because of the pandemic will also be issues following an earthquake. The parts of the community most impacted by COVID are now less resilient to withstand any additional impacts.

OEM has worked with our partner departments to identify ways to adapt a variety of disaster plans—including winter storm and earthquake—to pandemic considerations. The good news is that the essential personnel that we rely on during a disaster have already been working under

increased pandemic safety protocols for months—they know how to do their jobs while wearing PPE, and FAS has done a great job of ensuring there is plenty on hand. The functions that would be most challenging to implement during the pandemic are those related to the provision of food, water and sheltering to residents. We know the need for these services will be greater, and are working to improve our ability to deliver these services in a physically distanced environment. OEM is coordinating with HSD, OED, SPR, FAS, and Visit Seattle to develop a framework for how we could shelter residents in hotel rooms during a major earthquake—taking advantage of a temporary FEMA rule change to enable greater physical distancing in mass sheltering and feeding settings. This is not to say that there would not be challenges and some non-life safety functions [such as debris removal—for example] might go a little more slowly under pandemic precautions, but we have been working closely to minimize the pandemic's impact to the time sensitive functions to save lives and alleviate suffering after a major disaster.

The other near-term step is to continue to address the immediate needs of people suffering due to the pandemic. Restarting an inclusive economy, one that doesn't leave behind the most vulnerable, will help rebuild resilience in our residents. The more people who have stable housing and stocked pantries before a disaster, the fewer people the City will need to provide for afterwards. In order to restart that economy, we need to focus on getting through the pandemic safely. Which means ensuring vaccinations to frontline staff and vulnerable residents, while continuing the economic lifelines to small businesses so they can weather the impacts a little longer. Responding to the needs of the community caused by the pandemic will increase their resiliency.

21. Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings pose a significant risk in the City and region. Are you aware of the City's previous URM studies? What immediate steps can the City take to address this issue, and how, in the long-term, can the City address the issue of retrofitting these buildings to ensure the safety of occupants?

The City has studied and attempted to deal with the issue of URMs for approximately 50 years.

- Because there is a high cost for retrofitting these buildings, we have never identified a solution that would effectively incentivize private building owners to seismically retrofit their buildings voluntarily.
- Attempts to implement voluntary retrofit programs in California have proven ineffective.
 - **NDC Report page 20-** *In 2006, the Seismic Safety Commission of California surveyed 260 URM loss reduction programs throughout Seismic Zone 4.4 Of these programs, **39 allowed voluntary retrofits and their average rate of retrofit was 16%. When you compare that to the 70% average rate of retrofit across the 134 mandatory retrofit programs, it is clear that voluntary retrofit programs have historically been ineffective***
 - A mandatory retrofit ordinance is likely the only path to making the more than 1100 unreinforced masonry buildings in the city safer.
 - Some of the reluctance to move forward on a mandatory ordinance in the past has been based on the belief that an ordinance could have disproportionate impacts on some groups. For example, a building owner

- may pass on costs of a retrofit in the form of higher rents, having a negative impact on affordable housing.
- A thoughtfully developed policy that takes into account potential disproportioned impacts, can mitigate those impacts.
 - Ignoring the issue (and not requiring retrofit) will surely result in disproportionate impacts from an earthquake:
 - URM's disproportionately located in areas with higher numbers of people of color, low income, and limited English
 - Groups already disproportionately impacted by an earthquake would suffer even greater impacts due to increased risk of displacement, death/injury, utility outages, and emergency access to their neighborhoods due to URM damage.
 - **2,303** affordable housing units within URM buildings
 - We need to stop viewing seismic safety, affordable housing, historic preservation, and clean energy as competing policy priorities. They have shared goals and can likely result in cost savings/efficiency if coordinated appropriately.
 - A successful mandatory retrofit ordinance will require a menu of financing mechanisms that can help absorb some of the financial burden placed on building owners.
 - There has already been significant work done identifying what funding and financial mechanisms could be support a mandatory retrofit ordinance and decrease cost burden of building owners:
 - [2019 National Development Council report](#) for the City of Seattle on funding solutions (historic tax credits, retuning of transfer of development rights program, Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resilience (C-PACER) funding)
 - ASAP! (Alliance for Safety, Affordability and Preservation) [recommended retrofit credit program](#), where building owners could sell development rights or "density credits" to fund retrofits.
 - In the short-term, OEM will continue to seek FEMA mitigation funding to address vulnerable buildings where possible. However, these opportunities are very limited.
 - **Example:** OEM and Community Roots Housing partnered on an application to fund a seismic retrofit of the **Bremmer Apartments, a 49-unit affordable housing complex in downtown Seattle**. In May 2020, Community Roots Housing was awarded \$5 million.

22. In previous jobs, how did you know that city staff understood their roles and were prepared to respond in the event of a disaster?

We developed a comprehensive training and exercise plan that included regular engagement of city staff in training, drills, and exercises to practice disaster response roles and responsibilities.

23. What were the most innovative training and exercise improvements you witnessed during your tenure at California Governor's Office of Emergency Services? What will you bring as lessons learned from that role as you come to Seattle?

The development of a training and exercise program for non-public-safety organizations to demonstrate how they worked with and integrated into California's emergency management system. The best example of this is a training and exercise program for California Veterinarians and the subsequent development of the CA Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CVMRC), which trained Vets and Vet techs who deployed to disasters as responders for animal rescue and as part of the Incident Command System. The CVMRC spurred the development of a statewide network of volunteer animal rescue groups who supported large wildfire incidents.

Lessons learned from this are that everyone has a role in emergency management and once the principles are understood in terms that a group can connect to their organizational mission and goals, they can easily integrate into emergency management.

External Relations

24. How do Seattle's emergency management needs differ from those across the Puget Sound counties and the state?

Seattle hazards, while similar to other Puget Sound jurisdictions, will be more impactful due to the size and complexity of the population. Seattle also has many unreinforced masonry buildings which are especially dangerous in an earthquake zone. Seattle is the hub of the Pacific Northwest. With 730,400 residents (2018) and 581,780 jobs (2017), Seattle is the largest municipality in the region. It is the center of cultural, governmental and economic activity. Paradoxically, Seattle is both a city of neighborhoods that looks inward and one of the most trade dependent cities in the U.S. Forty percent of Washington State jobs are dependent on international trade, with the Port of Seattle serving as the main international trade hub.

Seattle is famous for rainy weather, proximity to nature, coffee, software, and airplanes, but as is often the case with things a place is famous for, the truth is more complex and interesting. Hazards do not affect the population equally. Some people suffer more than others. These people are 'socially vulnerable.' If large numbers of socially vulnerable people are impacted by a hazard, this inequity will make the resulting disaster "bigger." Seattle's most vulnerable people tend to be clustered around Seattle's edges, in Rainier Valley, Beacon Hill, south downtown, and North Seattle (around Northgate and Lake City Way). Social vulnerability affects all hazards. One of the most effective ways to reduce a community's overall vulnerability is to target social vulnerability.

25. What are your goals and plans for maintaining and improving an effective partnership with King County and neighboring jurisdictions?

While the Emergency Manager in Bellevue, I fostered good relationships with neighboring jurisdictions, and Snohomish, King, and Pierce County emergency managers. That work is maintained by regular engagement in a number of regional initiatives, the development of grant funded projects, and committee work. The Puget Sound Region emergency managers are very collaborative and work together on a regular basis. I will continue this collaboration.

26. What do you see as Seattle's challenges and opportunities in working with the State Emergency Management Division and FEMA?

OEM has had good working relationships with State EMD and FEMA. As we see the administration changes at the national level, we are also excited to see that a fellow, known emergency management colleague, Deanne Criswell, will be President Biden's FEMA Administrator appointment. Ms. Criswell is a fellow Big City Emergency Manager and she is intimately familiar with the successes and challenges of all large, metropolitan city emergency management programs. We also see more opportunities for mitigation efforts through FEMA and a possibility for funding to help decrease the impacts of disaster on our community. Short term with the transition, there will be staff changes and likely process and policy changes.

OEM works most frequently with State EMD. EMD has gone through many changes over the last few years and continuity has been impacted. We work with their team significantly on FEMA COVID public assistance processes. With COVID's large impacts, this work has been complex. OEM does participate on several committees at the State EMD levels and continues to be an avenue for us to influence and strengthen emergency management regionally and across the state.

27. How can Seattle maximize its share of state and federal resources in the current pandemic and future disasters?

There are a variety of sources of funding to help our City and community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Working closely with the Office of Intergovernmental Relations, the City Budget Office and Citywide accounting, OEM has been central to instituting the strategy to optimize every single state, federal and private source of funding that has become available.

OEM is the administrator of reimbursement and funding for FEMA Public Assistance. Because FEMA limits the types of costs that can be reimbursed, it has been and will continue to be imperative to maximize this source of reimbursement and apply additional funding sources to non-reimbursable categories such as rental assistance, food assistance and reopening expenses for city direct or contracted services. As funding continues to flow to the City, the feedback loop between internal departments and our federal and state partners will help ensure that policy priorities are advanced at the State and Federal efforts. With regard to FEMA Public Assistance, Seattle can maximize its share of state and federal resources by working with State EMD and FEMA to understand the requirements for obtaining funding and for receiving reimbursement for disaster and incident related activities.

28. Are you active in the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)? If so, what priorities will you emphasize in your work with national partners?

In 2016 the city's emergency management program was EMAP accredited and we are currently preparing for re-accreditation with our scheduled assessment occurring in September. Though not previously active in EMAP, I am an advocate of this program whereby the Emergency Management Standard is designed as a tool for continuous improvement as part of the voluntary accreditation process for local, state, federal, higher education and tribal emergency management programs. EMAP looks at all the core elements of a comprehensive program, which recognizes the ability of emergency management programs to bring together personnel, resources and communications from a variety of agencies and organizations in preparation for

and in response to an emergency, in addition to obtaining the ability to measure those capabilities. The accreditation process evaluates emergency management programs on compliance with requirements in sixteen areas, including: planning; resource management; training; exercises, evaluations, and corrective actions; communications and warning; and administration.

As for priorities in this area and my work with national partners, I believe in the vitalness of ongoing planning that addresses catastrophic events and building strong resource management capabilities at all levels.

29. What do you see as the private sector's role in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery? How will you support those roles as OEM's director?

The private sector owns and operates 70 to 80% of the nation's critical infrastructure. Partnering with the private sector is crucial to being successful in protecting that infrastructure. The private sector has a direct role in economic recovery and can be instrumental in helping a jurisdiction support redevelopment and recovery. Many private sector companies are able to devote more resources to research and development than can the public sector, and that research often leads to innovation that is advantageous to emergency management.

The private sector also contributes to disaster-recovery financing in a variety of ways, including playing a key role in early response and long-term recovery, collaborating with the public sector in public-private partnerships, driving innovation and facilitating technology use, helping smaller communities manage influxes of funds, and supplementing the federal disbursement processes.

Management and Operations

30. How do you approach organizational management? How would you describe your leadership style?

My leadership style is collaborative. I believe that teams work best and are most productive when they support each other and when each member understands how their work is instrumental to accomplishing the Office's mission. It is important that my team knows that I appreciate and support their work and respect their expertise. I believe investing in staff development and supporting each individual's career goals supports the team's effectiveness.

31. How will you review internal operations at OEM to determine if they need improvement?

Following each incident or exercise, OEM uses the After-Action Review process to evaluate the effectiveness of that work. That process includes the development of an improvement plan which identifies areas of improvement, who is responsible for each area, and a timeframe for completion of the improvement actions. We also develop a three-year strategic plan with input from stakeholders to provide a framework for our work delineate the goals and objectives need to accomplish them. The strategic plan is integrated with and connected to all of the plans that specify department roles and responsibilities for all phases of emergency management.

32. What do you see as your role in providing a welcoming and safe workplace for all City employees?

Through the practice of servant leadership; supporting my team and all who work with OEM. This support means spending time, coaching, mentoring, and supporting all I engage with and looking for ways to advise or coach others in emergency management principles and techniques.

33. How will you bridge operational silos across departments and maintain effective relationships with and between separate operations centers?

Effective emergency management is dependent upon building and maintaining relationships across disciplines and departments. OEM works with all operational departments on projects, through committee and task force work and by engaging in training and exercises. The Emergency Operations Center includes department representatives from the city's operational departments which OEM regularly engages with to practice disaster roles in drills and exercises.

Response to the pandemic has required City departments to work together in new and different ways. Department directors have experienced the power of cross-departmental work and are committed to working to maintain that cross departmental work.

My role is to continuously demonstrate the ways in which departments can continue to work together on city wide initiatives, such as Recovery from the pandemic, which includes community resilience building.

34. How will you engage and prepare department leadership for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery?

The Mayor's Emergency Executive Board (EEB) consisting of Mayor's Office senior staff and the directors of city departments meet quarterly to discuss each department's role and responsibilities in emergency mitigation, preparedness, prevention, response and recovery as defined in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. It is through the work of this committee that OEM engages department leadership for all phases of emergency management. The work of this Board includes practice of skills needed for successful and efficient emergency management with exercises.