



MPC Ready Purpose Statement Last update 30 November 2023

The City of Menlo Park lacks an *officially sponsored and coordinated* effort to engage residents in emergency and disaster preparedness activities. Menlo Park also includes unincorporated San Mateo County “islands” within or adjacent to Menlo Park. Thus, we include these areas in our disaster preparedness efforts.

The organization MPC Ready formed January 25, 2020 to start filling needed gaps in disaster preparedness. MPC Ready stands for Menlo Park Community Ready and we work across the 94025 City of Menlo Park Zip code.

Our model is based on best practices such as the Map my Neighborhood approach.

Organization Like MPC Ready – Long-term City Council Goal

At their February 24, 2015 City Council meeting, the City Council of Menlo Park established a goal to, **“Create a community disaster preparedness partnership w/ citizens, businesses & schools, utilizing existing agreement w/ Fire District.”**

The existing agreement with the Fire District refers to the yearly \$50,000 that the City of Menlo Park pays to the Menlo Park Fire Protection District (MPFPD) for “enhanced disaster preparedness services.”

The **2016 Status Report:** “City took part in a Multi-Agency Coordination Center Workshop sponsored by Palo Alto OES finalizing safety plans for two major employees (Facebook & Rosewood Hotel) and have completed safety plans for all schools. Entered into an MOU with the American Red Cross to ensure services are available during an emergency. Began. Coordinating training to the community, in partnership with the Menlo Park CERT, at the beginning of the 2016-17 fiscal year.”

[Thanks to a volunteer-led effort, we now have the partnership foundation in place.](#)

WHEREAS It has been demonstrated throughout the United States and the world that a close collaboration between government and its residents is essential to making communities resilient, safe, strong and prepared to respond to and recover from disasters and emergencies.

WHEREAS MPC Ready aims to bring together members of our community (residents, neighborhoods, organizations, faith community and businesses) to elevate the need to prepare for and increase our ability, as a community, to respond to disasters.

WHEREAS MPC Ready will utilize the volunteer talents and skills of community members, while aiming to work closely with the City of Menlo Park and local and County emergency service organizations to build a resilient and engaged community. We will also follow national policies and model our efforts on research-based best practices.

WHEREAS where best practices and research-based approaches exist MPC ready will follow them. This includes the research that shows typically most people ignore communications pertaining to preparedness. They procrastinate. However, community-based programs achieve more success by focusing on organizing neighborhoods where individual and household preparedness boosts collective resiliency.

WHEREAS MPC Ready will be an evolving program and focus on the following areas:

Government Relations

A close working relationship with the City of Menlo Park will be essential to have a successful and long-lasting program.

We also aim to work collaboratively with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District's CERT program to establish a clear role for trained and willing CERTS within an organized neighborhood.

Organized Neighborhoods

We aim to help build socially connected and disaster prepared neighborhoods. We want to see more neighborhoods like Suburban Park, Felton Gables, Park Forest, and Sand Hill Circle where neighbors have social and community service traditions, along with a focus on preparedness. These neighborhoods also know how to work together to advocate for solutions to neighborhood issues.

Social capital research demonstrates the value of organized neighborhoods. As described by Daniel P. Aldrich in *Building Resilience*, "High levels of social capital – more than socioeconomic conditions, population density, amount of damage or aid – serve as the core engine of recovery. Survivors with strong social networks experience faster recoveries and have access to needed information, tools and assistance" (2)"

We will also evaluate our methods to foster the full integration of vulnerable members of our community into disaster preparedness efforts.

Educate and Train

Methods include: newsletter, website, monthly community meetings, distribution of literature, disaster preparedness fairs, speakers' bureau, and tabletop exercises and neighborhood drills. Others include following local government planning efforts and advocating for disaster preparedness policies, goals and action items. We may also assist with tangible projects and submit recommendations.

Partnerships

We aim to work closely with counterpart groups and to establish partnerships with service-based organizations, faith community, and youth-based organizations.

Whole Community Approach

We aim for a whole community approach to disaster preparedness across residents, businesses, nonprofits, schools, faith community and the "day workers" who commute to/from Menlo Park. We aim to not overlap with government or other community-based organizations' efforts. Research also shows that building neighborhoods with "social capital" is proven to increase community resiliency. According to Lucien G. Canton, research shows that "almost 90% of disaster victims are rescued by private individuals, not by public agencies" (65). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also stresses getting to know one's neighbors for they will be the first people we will see following a disaster.

For More Information

Aldrich, Daniel P. *Building Resilience: Social Capital in Post-Disaster Recovery*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 2012. Print.

Canton, Lucien G. *Emergency Management: Concepts and Strategies for Effective Programs*. Second Edition. John Wiley & Sons Inc. Hoboken. 2020. Print.

Congressional Research Service. "National Preparedness: A Summary and Select Issues." February 26, 2021. Online.

National Fire Protection Association *NFPA 2019: Standard on Continuity, Emergency, and Crisis Management*. 7th Edition. Online.