

Staff Report



Corporate Services Department

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REPORT TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 20, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Amanda Fusco, Director, Legislated Services and City Clerk, 519-902-1402

PREPARED BY: Sean Bertleff, Manager Emergency Management and Business Continuity / CEMC, 519- 904-6106

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward(s)

DATE OF REPORT: April 20, 2026

REPORT NO.: COR-2026-161

SUBJECT: Emergency Management Program By-Law and Plan Annual Update

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Emergency Management Program By-Law as attached to Appendix A to Corporate Services department report COR-2026-161, be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to inform City Council of the recommended updates to the City of Kitchener Emergency Management Program By-Law and Emergency Management Plan.
- To recommend that the updated Emergency Management Program By-Law and Emergency Management Plan be approved.
- To recommend that By-Law 2024-039 be repealed and replaced with the new By-Law.
- An Emergency Management Program By-Law and Emergency Management Plan are requirements for annual compliance under the provincial legislation and regulation (Emergency Management and Civil Protect Act and Ontario Regulation 380/04).
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

All Ontario municipalities are required to implement an annual Emergency Management Program in compliance with provincial legislation and regulation. The mandatory components of that Emergency Management Program include:

1. Hazard Identification & Risk Analysis (HIRA)
2. Critical Infrastructure Inventory
3. Emergency Management Plan
4. Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)
5. Training Program and Annual Exercise
6. Public Awareness and Risk Specific Education

*** This information is available in accessible formats upon request. ***
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

7. Designated Emergency Management Program Committee
8. Designated Emergency Information Officer
9. Designated Community Emergency Management Coordinator
10. Annual Program Review

Legislation also requires that a municipal by-law be established and updated annually to empower both the Emergency Management Program and the Emergency Management Plan.

REPORT:

The City of Kitchener has a robust emergency management program that evolves year over year in compliance with the provincial legislation and regulation. We address the annual review of the program by-law and emergency plan as an opportunity to improve our state of readiness.

This year's recommended updates are subtle but serve to provide greater clarity in our structure, in key leadership responsibilities and will provide enhanced flexibility in how we differentiate between emergencies and business disruptions (Emergency Management vs Business Continuity).

By-law Updates

The recommended changes to the attached Emergency Management Program By-Law serve to clarify our leadership structure (Emergency Control Group) and create greater flexibility in how we assign other key supporting roles (Alternate Community Emergency Management Coordinators).

The revised by-law now clearly designates the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO), General Managers and the Chief Financial Officer (Corporate Leadership Team) collectively as the municipal Emergency Control Group (ECG). Upon activation of the Emergency Management Plan, those key leaders will be assigned roles within the Incident Management System (IMS) structure.

The revised by-law also removes the appointments of designated Alternate Community Emergency Management Coordinators (CEMCs). Alternate CEMCs are not required to be appointed by by-law. The city is empowered to appoint staff to those roles administratively with reporting to Emergency Management Ontario. This allows greater flexibility in assigning staff to those roles as required without requiring a by-law update.

The revised by-law updates the appointment of the Manager, Emergency Management and Business Continuity as the City of Kitchener Community Emergency Management Coordinator or CEMC which is a legislated requirement.

The revised by-law would replace the previous By-Law 2024-039 once repealed.

Emergency Management Plan Updates

The recommended updates to the Emergency Management Plan serve to further clarify key functional roles, leadership responsibilities and relationships within our emergency management structure. We accomplish this by designating leaders to roles within the Incident Management System (IMS) in alignment with the provincial doctrine. Minor updates to the plan wording throughout have been made to improve readability without making changes to the structure of the plan itself. Where changes have been made, the recommended updates are as follows.

Title – Emergency Management Plan

- Changes from the previous Emergency Response Plan in alignment with the Emergency Management Modernization Act

Section 3 – Concept of Operations:

- Amends Policy Group composition to allow flexibility to include Mayor, Members of Council, CAO, DCAO and other members of the ECG (as an expanded Policy Group)
- Separates corporate “Incident Response” and “Emergency Response” creating two response streams: Incident Management Team (IMT) for business continuity incidents and EOC Management Team (EOCMT) for emergency incidents
 - If both an emergency and business disruption occur together the default will be to use the “emergency response” stream and activation of the EOCMT

Section 7 – Incident Management System

- Further clarifies the roles of an Incident Management Team (IMT) vs an EOC Management Team (EOCMT)
- Provides additional details specific to the responsibilities of the IMS functions:
 - Policy Group – Mayor and CAO (strong linkages to Council)
 - Command – Director and Deputy Director
 - Command Staff – Emergency Information, Liaison, Legal / Risk and Health / Safety / Equity
 - General Staff - Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance
 - Branches and Units

The most significant change to the Emergency Management Plan for 2026 noted above is amending the Incident Management System structure specific to the role and composition of the

Policy Group and providing two structures, an Incident Management Team (IMT) and an Emergency Operations Centre Management Team (EOCMT).

- The IMT structure would be applied to business disruption incidents impacting the city's delivery of time critical services (Business Continuity).
- The EOCMT would be applied to emergency incidents requiring a controlled and coordinated city-wide response (Emergency Management).

The above changes will make our Emergency Management By-Law and Emergency Management Plan stronger while also providing enhanced flexible in how we manage emergencies and disruptions to time-critical City of Kitchener services to our community.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting. The approved City of Kitchener Emergency Management Plan is posted on the city's website and is to be made available for viewing by the public.

CONSULT – If applicable.

COLLABORATE – If applicable.

ENTRUST – If applicable.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2004*
- *Ontario Regulation 380/04*
- *Emergency Management Modernization Act, 2025*

APPROVED BY: Dimetra Resendes, Acting General Manager, Corporate Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A – 2026 Update – COK Emergency Management Plan - Appendix A to Emergency Management Program By-law