



Office of the Town Manager
Christopher E. Martino

Warrenton Town Council
Carter Nevill, Mayor
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William Semple, Ward 2
Larry Kovalik, Ward 3
Michele O'Halloran, Ward 4
Eric Gagnon, Ward 5
Paul Mooney, At Large
David McGuire, At Large

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date:	June 9, 2026
Agenda Title:	Emergency Operations Plan Adaption
Requested Action:	Receive the Information
Department / Agency Lead:	Police/Chief Timothy M. Carter
Staff Lead:	Chief Timothy M. Carter

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Warrenton, Virginia, recognizes the importance of proactive emergency management and, in July 2022, following the establishment of an Office of Emergency Management in 2020, the Town adopted an Emergency Operations Plan.

The Town is responsible for its own comprehensive emergency management program in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Title 44. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and the Code of Virginia require local jurisdictions to prepare, maintain, and periodically update an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure the community is prepared to respond effectively to emergencies and disasters. Virginia law requires each local and interjurisdictional emergency management agency to maintain a current Emergency Operations Plan and to conduct a comprehensive review and revision of the plan at least every four years, with formal adoption by the governing body.

An Emergency Operations Plan serves as the Town's all-hazards framework for coordinating preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities during emergencies such as severe weather events, flooding, hazardous material incidents, public health emergencies, utility disruptions, and other disasters. The plan establishes roles and responsibilities for Town departments, identifies coordination procedures with local, regional, state, and federal partners, and incorporates emergency management principles consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

BACKGROUND

The Town of Warrenton's Office of Emergency Management was created in December 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was officially established as an agency of emergency management for the Town by Ordinance 2022-11 at the July 12, 2022, Town Council Meeting. The office operates under the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000. In accordance with State law and VDEM requirements, The Town adopted an emergency operations plan on July 12, 2022. State law also requires that the plan be reviewed, revised if necessary, and readopted every four years. The Town's Emergency Operations Plan has been reviewed and is being presented to the Council for consideration.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Receive the Information and consider adoption of the Emergency Operations Plan at the July Meeting.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

Adoption of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) will enhance the Town's ability to coordinate and deliver essential services during emergencies and disasters. The plan establishes a comprehensive framework for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities, providing clear procedures for maintaining continuity of government operations and critical public services. While adoption of the EOP does not substantially alter the day-to-day delivery of Town services, it formalizes roles, responsibilities, communication protocols, and resource coordination procedures that would be activated during emergency incidents.

The EOP affects multiple Town functions, including public safety, public works, utilities, administration, communications, finance, and community services. The plan provides guidance for interdepartmental coordination, emergency resource management, public information dissemination, damage assessment, and recovery operations. Adoption also supports compliance with state and federal emergency management requirements and may improve eligibility for certain emergency management grants, training opportunities, and disaster assistance programs.

Implementation and enforcement of the staff recommendation will primarily affect Town personnel assigned emergency management responsibilities. The Town Manager, Emergency Management Coordinator, department heads, and designated emergency response personnel will be responsible for maintaining familiarity with the plan, participating in training and exercises, updating departmental procedures as necessary, and carrying out assigned responsibilities during emergency activations. Adoption of the EOP will require periodic staff training, plan reviews, and participation in emergency preparedness exercises; however, these activities are generally consistent with existing emergency management responsibilities and they may create significant operational burdens.

Overall, adoption of the Emergency Operations Plan will strengthen the Town's preparedness and response capabilities, improve coordination among departments and external agencies, and provide a clear organizational structure for managing emergencies while supporting the continued delivery of essential municipal services.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

The Warrenton Plan 2040 establishes the long-term strategic vision for the Town's growth, community character, and economic development. While the Comprehensive Plan focuses on standard municipal progress, the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) serves as the critical operational safeguard for that vision. By establishing a robust framework to respond to unforeseen, outside-the-norm emergencies and disasters,

the EOP ensures the continuity of government and the protection of local infrastructure. This baseline resilience allows the Town to effectively navigate crises, swiftly stabilize operations, and seamlessly resume the day-to-day work necessary to achieve the goals outlined in the Warrenton Plan 2040.

Fiscal Impact

There may be additional fiscal impacts associated with the re-adoption of the Emergency Operations Plan. While the Town Council has previously recognized the critical importance of emergency preparedness, Emergency response operations and agency maintenance are only partially incorporated into the Town's established budget, therefore additional appropriations may be required going forward.

Legal Impact

The Code of Virginia requires a four-year review, revision, and re-adoption of the EOP. Failure to re-adopt the EOP would result in the Town being out of compliance with a mandatory state-law requirement tracked by VDEM. Failure to adhere to this requirement would put in jeopardy the Town's status as an independent emergency management agency. It could also lead to legislative scrutiny, a loss of eligibility for state and federal grants tied to emergency management, and/or affect operational readiness and mutual aid coordination.

ATTACHMENTS

1. ToW Emergency Operations Plan – Updated June 2022