



# LIVABLE CITY YEAR

## City of Auburn



### HOW PREPARED ARE AUBURN RESIDENTS FOR AN EMERGENCY?



#### Executive Summary

The City of Auburn Emergency Management is interested in residents' understanding of the natural and man-made disaster risks they face, how well prepared they are for such disasters, and how the city could better communicate with its residents about emergency preparedness to address the gaps in knowledge. Thus, we conducted a situation analysis to inform policies and programs to ensure that individuals and neighborhoods are prepared to take care of themselves, their families, and their neighbors after a disastrous event.

#### Primary Research Questions

Our qualitative approach is vested in the community's voice to inform tools and policies that are of the greatest utility for the diverse population and unique risks faced by the city. Questions we asked are:

- Do Auburn residents understand the disaster risks they face?
- What steps have residents taken to prepare their households?
- What can the city do to ensure better communication among neighborhoods in terms of disaster preparedness?

Surveying outside Grocery Outlet in South Auburn.  
Photo Credit: Caroline Johnson



#### Design Development

The findings from this project will begin to reveal gaps in residents' preparedness and provide meaningful feedback for Auburn Emergency Management as they develop an affordable neighborhood preparedness program and outline next steps. Communication strategies and best practices will ensure greater consistency and regulation of household preparedness, which has city-wide benefits. Our project's findings will help inform:

- How to aim limited public resources to best support disaster preparedness
- Preferred communication outlets and delivery strategies, including diverse languages
- How to develop emergency preparedness information materials to generate the greatest level of understanding among populations of various levels of socioeconomic status

Best ways to sustain outreach to uphold a consistent and sufficient level of preparedness  
Policy recommendations for future use on emergency preparedness education.



Site visit at the City of Auburn Emergency Operating Center.  
Photo Credit: Amy Hagopian

#### Methods

- In-person and online surveys assessing household preparedness
- Qualitative interviews with stakeholders
- Focus groups with religious congregations and school teachers

Our multi-method approach was initiated by a site visit and informal interview with the City of Auburn Emergency Management Team. This visit helped us determine the best methodological approach to capture various opportunities for improvement in household-level preparedness.



Prepped and ready for surveying around town.  
Photo Credit: City of Auburn

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