



Local Governments Empowering Our Communities

# Building Local Resilience Models – BayREN Resilient Libraries Network

June 13, 2023



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# The Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)



# BayREN Strategic Plan – Updated Mission and Vision

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**Mission:** BayREN is a local government coalition of the nine Bay Area counties supporting communities to equitably achieve California’s climate and energy goals

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**Vision:** By 2025, BayREN’s organization, resources and programs will evolve to more intentionally integrate equity, while filling gaps and addressing barriers to energy efficiency and electrification, as an essential part of meeting State climate and energy goals



# Input into the Business Plan

**Strategic Planning:** In 2021, BayREN undertook a strategic planning process, culminating in the BayREN 2025 Strategic Plan



**Stakeholder Engagement:** BayREN engaged multiple stakeholders through a series of approximately 15 meetings and listening sessions



**Community Resilience Center Focus groups:** BayREN conducted additional listening sessions to assess support needs for CRCs

# New Public Sector Programs



**1) Targeted Decarbonization Resources Program:** Includes decarbonization showcase and decarbonization education and financing



**2) Integrated Energy Services:**  
Technical assistance to support integrated energy solutions for public buildings

Focus on integrating energy resilience and supporting local governments to create CRCs in municipal buildings and beyond

# BayREN Resilient Libraries Network

Pilot initiative





# BayREN Resilient Libraries Network

- New pilot initiative **open to Bay Area cities and counties** to build local energy resilience and inform design of BayREN's new Public Sector Program by developing a network of Community Resilience Centers (CRCs) at Bay Area libraries
- **Benefits of Participation**
  - Join a network of CRCs and receive community engagement and facilitation support
  - Free engineering technical assistance and recommendations
  - Identification of relevant funding sources to support each CRC

# Defining Resilience Hubs/CRCs – USDN

- **Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities augmented to:**
  - support residents and
  - coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event.
- **Other benefits:**
  - Reduce GHG emissions and improve local quality of life
  - Reduce burden on local emergency response teams
  - Improve access to health improvement initiatives
  - Foster greater community cohesion
  - Increase the effectiveness of community-centered institutions and programs
  - Opportunity to build local community power and leadership

# Why Libraries?

- **Municipal buildings** that are established and accessible gathering places for local communities
- Provide **valuable educational resources** which can be built on and expanded to incorporate local resilience
- Libraries are often **welcoming facilities** for **diverse populations**

*The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man.*

*- T.S. Eliot*

**BAYREN**





# Site Assessment Report Outline

- Goals for CRC
  - Who do you plan to serve?
  - What resources will your site provide?
  - When will you provide them?
- **Site Energy Assessment**
  - Efficiency
  - Resilience
  - Health (Clean Air, Cooling)
- **Energy Upgrade Recommendations**
- **Funding/Financing Opportunities Identification**
  - Energy
  - Other non-energy goals

# New Funding – Federal, State, Local

US DOE Office of  
Clean Energy  
Demonstrations

- Energy Storage Demo and Pilot Grant Program

Strategic Growth  
Council

- Community Resilience Center (CRC) Program

CA Office of  
Planning &  
Research (OPR)

- Regional Resilience Grant Program





**COUNTY** OF  
**SAN MATEO**



## Meet the BayREN Resilient Libraries Network!

- Alameda County - 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue Branch Library
- Alameda County – West Oakland Library
- Marin County – Fairfax Branch Library
- Marin County – Novato Branch Library
- San Mateo County – East Palo Alto Library
- Santa Clara County – Biblioteca Latinoamericana Library (BLA) San Jose





# Spotlight: Biblioteca Latinoamericana Library

## Focus on Equity Priority Communities

- Located in an EPC and is already designated as a "Disaster District Office" for Council District 3 in San Jose.

## Supporting Ongoing Efforts with Valuable Technical Assistance

- TA received through the pilot will drive community engagement sessions and inform how to operationalize BLAs role as a CRC. Funding from CA State Library will help implement energy upgrade recommendations.

## Improving Coordination and Delivery of Resilience Programs

- BLA is near the Santee neighborhood of San José, where a new equity-focused sustainability program is being piloted by the City's Climate Smart program – a Zero Emissions Neighborhood (ZEN). The ZEN pilot will be linked with the BLA CRC work in order to strengthen the depth of community engagement for both efforts.



# Spotlight: Novato Branch Library

## Serves CA Climate Investment Priority Communities

- The community served by this site includes 3 census tracts identified as investment priorities with limited English proficiency and low-income as well as a large population of seniors

## Serving Unhoused Community

- The library is located next to a semi-permanent homeless encampment managed by the City. The CRC hopes to expand partnerships to better serve this population

## Focus on Families and Connection

- Library staff have expressed interest in expanding services for families with a focus on support during extreme events and connection with local and regional resources





# Spotlight: Fairfax Branch Library

## Focus on Seniors

- Town of Fairfax has a large senior population, and this site already serves as a resource during extreme temperature events

## Community Communication Hub

- Previous events have highlighted the need for an information hub with analog information when power is out and internet connections go down

## Building on Existing Services

- This site already has a program to distribute laptops and internet connections to those in need and there is desire to build on these resources to improve resilience





# Spotlight: East Palo Alto Library

## Environmental History of EPA

- This library serves residents in one of the most pollution burdened areas of San Mateo County

## Meeting Community Needs

- The EPA library currently serves meals, provides access to AC, filtered air, power to charge devices, and computer access

## Providing Extra Resources

- Prior to the pandemic, Dignity on Wheels partnered with the library and came weekly



# Spotlight: East Palo Alto Library

## More Support for Ongoing Programs

- The pilot will enable additional outreach and identification of funding for ongoing programs and staffing

## Expanding an Existing Community Hub

- SMC Office of Sustainability has done extensive outreach to various community groups that already provide services in partnership with EPA Library – the pilot is enabling them to further collaborate and partner to meet community needs

## Support to Improve Plans and Identify Funding

- There are existing plans to upgrade EPA but these need to be updated and funding needs to be identified to implement more of the desired library features





# Spotlight: Oakland 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue Branch

## Unique Position as Both School and Public Library

- Located in an EPC and provides services to 2 public schools and the larger community. Library staff have expressed interest in providing resilience education

## Expanding an Existing Community Hub

- During the pandemic, expanded services out of necessity to include food distribution, coordination with high-risk individuals and support for City's EOC

## Community Needs Support During Small and Large Disruptions

- Outreach revealed need for flexible spaces that provide services during both small and large disruptions





## Spotlight: West Oakland Library

### Focus on Equity Priority Communities

- Located in an EPC and is already identified by the community as one of 3 facilities that will make up the West Oakland Resilience Hub

### Opportunity for Complete Rebuild

- The site requires a full rebuild to meet critical needs - technical assistance reflects this

### Meeting Critical Needs

- Community served by the library does not have equitable access to back up power or AC or air filtration



# Local Resilience in Action

- Story bus Visits for Children's services to the West Oakland Branch





# Local Resilience in Action

Garden Day at West Oakland Branch Library





# Local Resilience in Action

Garden Day at West Oakland Branch Library





Local Resilience in Action

Garden Day at West  
Oakland Branch Library

# Thank you!



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**For more information please visit:**

<https://www.bayren.org/addressing-existing-buildings/bay-area-resilient-libraries-network-initiative>

