

Pilot Background

The Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) is a coalition of the Bay Area's nine counties — a network of local governments partnering to promote resource efficiency at the regional level, focusing on energy, water, and greenhouse gas reduction. Led by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), BayREN offers rebates, funding, and technical assistance to help residents, property owners, business owners and local governments improve the resource-efficiency and carbon footprint of their buildings.

Many of the local governments that BayREN serves are currently working to develop Resilience Hubs, also called Community Resilience Centers (CRCs). According to the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN), CRCs are “community-serving facilities augmented to 1) support residents and 2) coordinate resource distribution and services before, during and/or after a natural hazard event.”¹ The Bay Area has and will continue to experience natural hazard events such as flooding, wildfires, extreme heat, hazardous air quality and widespread power outages. Given that many Bay Area residents and businesses cannot provide access to spaces that mitigate the negative health impacts of these events, CRCs are an urgent and critical element of local adaptation strategies.

The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man. —T.S. Eliot



Building Local Energy Resilience

To help build local capacity and improve community energy efficiency and resilience, BayREN designed a new Public Sector Program, to be launched in 2024 subject to approval by the California Public Utilities Commission. The program includes free resources and engineering technical assistance to support local governments in integrating energy into local resilience planning. Prior to the new Public Sector program launch in 2024, BayREN sees an opportunity to develop a pilot project to help inform the design of the new Public Sector program and to support the integration of energy resilience and efficiency as priorities in local resilience planning. Because energy resilience is just one component of developing a successful CRC, through this pilot, BayREN will also convene key regional partners and identify additional funding sources for participants to support the non-energy related components of CRCs including community outreach and engagement, air quality upgrades and development of educational resources.

¹ <https://www.usdn.org/resilience-hubs.html>

Pilot Objectives and Approach

The Bay Area Resilient Libraries Network Pilot will convene local jurisdictions, regional agencies, and other partners to support the development of a network of local libraries throughout the Bay Area that can also function as Community Resilience Centers (CRC) based on local needs. The pilot program is focused on libraries because they are buildings that are established gathering places for communities that already provide valuable educational resources and are typically welcoming municipal facilities for diverse populations. Libraries are critical community assets and are well positioned to incorporate local resilience priorities based on local community needs. BayREN will develop a white paper at the conclusion of the pilot project to share lessons learned and a framework for replication with non-participating jurisdictions.

The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library.

—Albert Einstein

Pilot Goals:

- Facilitate energy efficiency, distributed energy resources, and other related improvements and upgrades for libraries to increase their resilience
- Create a network of libraries across the Bay Area that can share challenges and learn from each other during the pilot program and beyond
- Better position pilot participants and the region for future resilience related funding opportunities

The health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture and our concern for the future can all be tested by how well we support our libraries.

—Carl Sagan

Pilot Criteria

The Bay Area Resilient Libraries Network pilot is open to Bay Area cities or counties in BayREN territory who are also PG&E customers.

Pilot Participation Criteria:

- City or County designated as lead applicant with committed staff capacity to participate in full pilot program
- Identified Library site with clear CRC goals outlining communities that will be served and the resources that will be provided (e.g. clean air, cooling, back up power etc.)
- Municipal staff support identified and engaged (both Public Works and Library staff)
- Potential community partners identified

Provide Your Feedback

BayREN is currently seeking input on the pilot program design from Bay Area city and county staff who may be interested in applying to participate. Please share your thoughts and suggestions through this [online survey](#) – responses will be collected through May 13th 2022.

Please contact Aleka Seville at aseville@bayareametro.gov with any questions.