



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

September 7, 2022

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Sean Youra, Climate Action Coordinator

SUBJECT: Authorize Mayor to sign Letter of Support for the Fairfax Library Application to BayREN's Resilient Libraries Network Pilot

RECOMMENDATION

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter of support for the Fairfax Library application to BayREN's Resilient Libraries Network Pilot.

BACKGROUND

The Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) is launching a new pilot initiative open to Bay Area cities and counties to build local energy resilience through the development of a network of local libraries throughout the Bay Area that can also function as Community Resilience Centers (CRCs) based on local needs. This initiative is called the Bay Area Resilient Libraries Network Pilot, and it has the following goals:

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

BayREN is currently soliciting applications for the pilot, and applications are due September 30. The Fairfax Library, which is a branch of the Marin County Free Library, is planning to submit an application for the pilot. As part of the application requirements, a CRC team has been formed that is comprised of library staff, County staff, Town staff, Town councilmembers, the Chair of the Town's Climate Action Committee (CAC), and an MCE representative. Although not required for the application, a letter of support may be provided by any of the CRC team members.

DISCUSSION

To further strengthen Fairfax Library's application to BayREN's Resilient Libraries Network Pilot, staff recommends the attached letter of support for the library's application be approved by the Town Council and included as part of the application packet.

If selected for the pilot, Fairfax Library will be able to benefit by:

- Joining a network of Bay Area libraries working to improve community resilience based on local needs

- Receiving community engagement and facilitation support to develop community-driven goals for the CRC
- Receiving engineering technical assistance and recommendations to identify energy upgrades needed to improve the library building's efficiency, resilience, and ability to provide cooling and clean air
- Working directly with resilience funding and finance experts to identify relevant funding sources to support the CRC and implement recommended energy upgrades

The development of a CRC at the Fairfax Library can address several vital needs of the surrounding community including:

- Serving as a safe space during potential emergencies including wildfires, PSPS events, extreme temperature events, and poor air quality days
- Providing reliable digital access to information and functioning as a community communication hub
- Providing educational information ahead of emergencies to ensure residents are better prepared if an emergency were to occur

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ATTACHMENT

Letter of Support for Fairfax Library Application to BayREN's Resilient Libraries Network Pilot

Letterhead

September 7, 2022

Aleka Seville
Association of Bay Area Governments
375 Beale Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066
aseville@bayareametro.gov

RE: Support for Resilient Libraries Network Pilot Initiative

Dear Aleka Seville:

I am writing on behalf of the Fairfax Town Council in support of the potential creation of a Community Resilience Center at the Fairfax branch of the Marin County Free Library. This would help to address the ever-growing need of citizens in the town and surrounding areas to access communications, charging of devices, cooling, heating, and indeed a place to gather, during both planned and unplanned power outages and during emergencies.

Fairfax is likewise actively working to increase the resiliency of Town-owned buildings, including a possible Resilience Center in the Pavilion; however the number of people in our area that might avail themselves of such a facility would definitely warrant a Community Resilience Center at the Library.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hellman, Mayor
Town of Fairfax