

## **Project Needs and Information Inputs Report**

May 31, 2024

City of Petaluma

CDBG Grant 17-MITPPS-21017:

Feasibility Study

Establishing a Resilience Hub at Community Center for Emergency Use

### **Grant Funding Note:**

This document is a component of work related to the City of Petaluma 17-MITPPS-21017 Program Application Project Overview approved by the State of California - Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program on July 16, 2021.

## **Abstract**

This Project Needs and Information Inputs (PNII) Report is intended to provide informed considerations for a potential Resilience Hub for Emergency Use, as well as an assessment of current city facilities that may have the potential to serve in the capacity of, or support the function of, a Resilience Hub for Emergency Use.

For more information on the Feasibility Study Establishing a Resilience Hub at Community Center for Emergency Use project, please see the Program Application Project Overview (Revision 17-MITPPS-21017 11/1/23).

## Introduction

Climate change is expected to result in longer droughts and longer weather systems with extreme temperatures. Extreme temperatures disproportionately affect the health of vulnerable populations<sup>1</sup>, including those in the City of Petaluma.

The project to which this Project Needs and Information Inputs (PNII) Report relates, a Feasibility Study Establishing a Resilience Hub at Community Center for Emergency Use to function as a cooling center, or “resiliency hub” or “safe place” during severe weather events, involving heat waves, poor air quality, and wildfires (funded by Community Development Block Grant 17-MITPPS-21017) is comprised of 7 Project Tasks: Public Outreach for Input on Needs, Staff Interviews, Partner Agency Interviews, Facility Assessment, Present Conceptual Recommendations to Council (this report and presentation), Refine Recommendations and Develop Plans and Specifications, and Public Outreach for Implementation.

This report is organized into three Sections. The Sections describe the Process, Findings, and Recommended Actions resulting from project work. Attached to this Report are presentation materials for a presentation to City Council on this Report and the Program Application Project Overview (Revision 17-MITPPS-21017 11/1/23).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/climateimpacts/climate-change-and-health-socially-vulnerable-people>

## Process

Work on this Project Needs and Information Inputs (PNII) Report began with the development of an online survey intended to be completed by a diverse set of experienced leaders from the City of Petaluma, associated local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management (SoCo DEM). These leaders have had local experience with real-world disaster response and community support, and serve in day-to-day roles with a nexus to community resilience in Petaluma.

The survey consisted of a brief project overview followed by a survey question set that consisted of two sections: the first section asked respondents about what needs and opportunities their organization identifies in establishing a Resilience Hub for Emergency Use at the city Community Center, and the second section asked who else the respondents recommend that project staff contact with questions on establishing needs and opportunities. The survey concludes with an opportunity for more detailed responses to the questions, and a statement regarding the project timeline and anticipated future participation requests.

This survey work was supplemented with interviews of staff who are knowledgeable of facility operations and program implementation. These interviews, and clarification interviews with survey respondents, were conducted at potential Resilience Hub for Emergency Use site locations. This on-site dialog allowed for a more informed site reconnaissance process and allowed for the Facility Assessment process in project Task 4 to be expedited (not a complete

Facility Condition Assessment conducted by architects, engineers, and skilled-trade technicians).

## Findings

The findings in this report are categorized as needs and opportunities related to a potential Resilience Hub for Emergency Use. These findings are followed by initial analysis and Recommended Actions (established in a Conceptual Recommendations List) and are preliminary in that project Task 7, Public Outreach for Implementation, is intended to provide feedback, validation or correction, and whole-community opportunities to comment on the professional project inputs reflected in this report.

Findings from the Survey and Interview process were primarily based on qualitative inputs. When possible, project survey participants were subsequently interviewed in conversation and when possible, on location at various sites associated with the information collection process. This method afforded significant economy of scale for project costs, it also facilitated focused and referential interview environments that contributed to the facility assessments.

While the survey, interview, and facility assessment process was underway, a key site within the city transitioned to a city operated resource (the Petaluma Fairgrounds and Events Center at 175 Fairgrounds Drive, Petaluma). In order to provide as comprehensive and timely an assessment of the “Fairgrounds” as possible, facilities within the area of the site were added as potential sites for a Resilience Hub for Emergency Use.

The findings of the project work identify the following Needs and Opportunities:

## Needs

- Enhanced real-time emergency resilience information sharing for seniors and low-income individuals is identified as needed because
  - Most seniors who are clients of service CBOs do not access news via the internet, and use traditional forms of media that are not able to provide real-time response and recovery information
  - Communication of emergency resilience information will allow for more coordination related to distribution of related services and goods
- A purpose specific Resilience Hub Facility for Emergency Use that works in conjunction with a distributed services delivery model is identified as needed because
  - Transportation to resources such as a Resilience Hub for Emergency Use are a challenge for vulnerable populations, particularly in time when those resources may be needed most (e.g., Cooling Center during a heatwave weather system)
  - Current potential spaces have uses that would be needed concurrent to Resilience Hub for Emergency Use operations (the Petaluma Community Center is not considered an option based on this and building requirements identified by stakeholders)
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) specific to community emergency resilience activities between the City and existing and potential City affiliated resilience service providers with existing resilience service providers are identified as needed because

- Staffing is required for a Resilience Hub for Emergency Use both regularly and when surge staffing is required
- Reimbursement from State or Federal partners after a proclaimed or declared disaster is facilitated by having in-place agreements prior to activation of resources

## **Opportunities**

- Existing City partnerships with information outlets that are relied on by seniors and low-income individuals
  - Build real-time emergency resilience information sharing partnership with local low power FM broadcaster
  - Engage patrons of the city Senior Center and disaster preparedness training programs as senior specific communication best practices subject matter experts
  - Engage clients of City and partner organization services for vulnerable individuals as best practices subject matter experts on communications with them
- Design and build purpose specific Resilience Hub for Emergency Use
  - Ability to operate independently from the utility grid, often referred to as “off-grid” generation
    - True “Cooling Center” and “Warming Center” capabilities when electrical de-energization are a result of extreme weather, storm, human caused, or seismic disruption.
    - Power supply for Resident and Visitor personal health and communication devices



- Ability to support City and partner organization distributed services delivery models and Emergency Shelter site support
  - Logistics, Resource Sort and Store (RSS) warehouse program model from County
    - Food and Water supply ready for immediate use
    - Basic medical supplies appropriate for known vulnerable populations
    - Emergency Shelter, Temporary Evacuation Point, Local Assistance Center, and other site staff support equipment (e.g., communications equipment, signage, facility evaluation checklists, print and electric Operations Plans)
- Community Building and Educational Workshops
  - Enhance City and partner organization community building events and educational workshops with community emergency resilience information
  - Potential Sonoma County Universal Disaster Intake Process (UDIP) data integration and analysis for trending future resilience needs
- Private-public partnership support with MOUs specific to community organizations which conduct voluntary and contract emergency resilience service activities
  - Volunteer and Staff reimbursement for partner agency work in proclaimed and declared disasters
    - Resilience Hub for Emergency Use roles in general disaster response

- Transportation resource needs and appropriate documentation (e.g., iRide or Disaster Logistics volunteers affiliation and licensing)

## **Recommended Actions**

Project design called for a “SWOT” matrix to be created for Recommended Actions identified in the findings and initial analysis process.

The name SWOT is an acronym for the four aspects of the study technique: Strengths - characteristics of the action that give it an advantage over others, Weaknesses - characteristics that place the action at a disadvantage relative to others, Opportunities - elements in the environment that may benefit the action, Threats - elements in the environment that could hinder success of the action. This report contains SWOT matrices prepared for a set of Recommended Actions identified below in a Conceptual Recommendations List. The Recommendations in the list are not in order of ranking or mutually exclusive.

### **Recommended Actions / Conceptual Recommendations List:**

1. Establish opportunities for enhanced real-time information sharing focused on seniors and low-income individuals
2. Design and build a purpose specific Resilience Hub Facility for Emergency Use
3. Establish Memorandums of Understanding specific to community emergency resilience activities between the City and existing and potential City affiliated resilience service providers

**Recommended Action 1:**

**Establish opportunities for enhanced real-time information sharing focused on seniors and low-income individuals**

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses a need for a growing population segment</li> <li>• No to low cost of participation for community members</li> <li>• Alignment with developing Neighborhood Response Group program communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPCA-LP, a low-power radio station (103.3 FM), is licensed to serve Petaluma and affiliated with City Government</li> <li>• City currently operates a Senior Center facility and set of programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Cost Volume = \$ \$</li> </ul>

**Recommended Action 2:****Design and build a purpose specific Resilience Hub Facility for Emergency Use**

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sonoma County examples from Department of Emergency Management response commodities warehouse program</li> <li>• Community Based Organization Partners already utilize distributed services delivery models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No current city facility is appropriate to be repurposed for this use</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to temporarily operate independently from the electrical utility grid</li> <li>• Expansion of related Community Building and Educational Workshops to support Resilience Hub Facility for Emergency Use functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Cost Volume = \$\$\$\$\$</li> </ul>

**Recommended Action 3:**

**Establish Memorandums of Understanding specific to community emergency resilience activities between the City and existing and potential City affiliated resilience service providers**

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City has many Community Based Organization Partners who are capable of community emergency resilience activities</li> <li>• A Community Organizations Active in Disaster resource to support exists in Sonoma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer and Staff reimbursement for partner agency work</li> <li>• Clear established and validated expectations among partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Cost Volume = \$</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

With the completion of Public Outreach for Input on Needs, Staff Interviews, Partner Agency Interviews, Facility Assessments, and the Presentation of Conceptual Recommendations to Council (this report and presentation – and associated project feedback), staff will now work on next steps as identified in the Project Overview planning document.

The remaining project tasks are to Refine Recommendations and Develop Plans and Specifications (e.g. establish standard operating procedures for managing and operating a Resilience Hub Facility for Emergency Use) and to conduct Public Outreach for inputs to provide feedback, validation or correction, and whole-community opportunities to comment on potential implementation goals and approaches to achieve identified goals.

This report will be followed by a Project Closeout Report no later than December 2024.

Comments regarding this Project Needs and Information Inputs Report may be submitted to staff in writing:

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