Resilient Bayview Heat and Poor Air Quality Resilience Program

In the after math of the lethal heatwave of 2017, Resilient Bayview created a hyper local strategy to protect the health and well-being of its vulnerable residents during heat and poor air quality events. Entitled the Heat and Poor Air Quality Resilience Program, this strategy has been tested in pursuant heat events and has now been deployed in San Francisco's Richmond district. This document offers details on the genesis of this program and its 2022 efforts.

Background

In 2013, a cohort of Bayview residents and organizations came together to craft and implement a strategy for protecting their most vulnerable residents during times of stress using the Neighborhood Empowerment Network's HUB development methodology. The cohort adopted the name Resilient Bayview and ultimately generated its first Resilience Action Plan which hosted their readiness and response strategies for all hazards.

On Labor Day Weekend of 2017, the City and County of San Francisco was struck with an unprecedented heatwave. Due to its geographical location, the Bayview experienced the highest temperatures in the City, 116 degrees, and its residents' health was put under severe stress. Due to its previous investment in the capacity to respond to any hazard, the Resilient Bayview team activated a cooling center at the Bayview Y with less than 12 hours notice. The center was well organized and had sufficient resources, staffing and cool air however few residents visited.

Soon afterwards, the Resilient Bayview leadership conducted an after-action exercise and determined that a variety of investments needed to be made to ensure that residents received higher service levels during future heat events.

In 2018, with funding from the SF Foundation, the NEN, Resilient Bayview, SF DPH and SFDEM teamed up to prototype a new heatwave / poor air quality readiness & response strategy that would be designed and implemented from the ground up by the community for the community.

The Resilient Bayview Heat and Poor Air Quality Resilience Program

Leveraging the same methods used to create their all-hazards resilience action plan, Resilient Bayview launched its Heat and Poor Air Quality Resilience Program.

The program management team crafted a strategy that would bring all essential Bayview stakeholders together within a process that would generate the goals and objectives that would guide Resilient Bayview's efforts moving forward.

On April 26th, 2018, 56 people representing 31 organizations and agencies participated in a workshop facilitated by both community and government representatives. The agenda featured briefings, trainings and a tabletop exercise that challenged participants to identify what they would need to do during a three-day heatwave to protect the vulnerable and what barriers they would experience. In addition, attendees completed surveys and assessments that captured information about their agency and the efficacy of the workshop.

The program management team then synthesized the collected data and generated the following goals and objectives which were ultimately memorialized in a program management plan:

- Identify and inventory best practices for vulnerable populations disaster resilience
- Create Database of Community Partner Agencies
- Develop a Strong Organization Heat Relief Center Design & Activation Playbook
- Onboard Bayview Organizations as Heat Relief Centers
- Create a Communications/Outreach Plan for Resident Heatwave & Poor Air Quality Preparedness
- Create a HUB activation strategy for heat events

Once the plan was ratified by the Resilient Bayview leadership, the program management team began its implementation and over the course of a year successfully achieved all of their objectives. Specifically:

- Created a Database that will house the data of Bayview stakeholder organizations that will support the program's pre and post event activities
- Created a culturally competent preparedness campaign that empowers vulnerable residents, their social network and service agencies to increase their capacity to mitigate the health impacts of heatwaves
- Created a neighborhood wide activation strategy that features a Neighborhood Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) that coordinates the activities of local stakeholders, in partnership with city agencies such as

DPH and HSA, to protect the health and well-being of Bayview residents during times of stress
- Established two Cooling Centers and 3 Heat Relief Centers in the Bayview Community for the upcoming 2018 Heatwave season.

The Resilient Bayview Heat and Poor Air Quality Resilience Program Plan

In 2022, the Resilient Bayview HUB will expand its focus from exclusively responding to the COVID 19 pandemic and re-start the process of making organizational and resident level readiness investments to reduce the health impacts of heatwaves/poor air quality on the Bayview's most vulnerable residents. The goals are to:

- Continue the important work of ending the pandemic
- Onboard local organizations that are part of the pandemic response
- Build on the success of the work pre-pandemic and broaden the community's readiness levels to future heatwaves, poor air quality as well as shocks such as power outages and earthquakes.