



# Climate Change Commission

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 South King Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

## COMMISSIONERS

Charles Fletcher, Ph.D., Chair  
Rosanna Alegado, Ph.D., Vice Chair  
Makena Coffman, Ph.D.  
Melanie Islam, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C, LFA  
Victoria Keener, Ph.D.

## **Climate Change Commission Thursday, October 28, 2021 9:00 AM Zoom Virtual Meeting Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Chair Charles Fletcher, Vice Chair Rosie Alegado, Makena Coffman, Melanie Islam, Victoria Keener.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Public:** Nicola Hedge, Hayley Cook (Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency); Courtney Sue-Ako (Corporation Counsel); Terry Chan (Department of Design and Construction); James McCallen, Parker Kushima (Hawai'i State Energy Office); David Rodriguez (Hawai'i Department of Transportation); Nancy McPherson (Department of Hawaiian Homelands); Pane Meatoga III (HOEISF); Steve Chang; Liko Gill; Colin Lee; Mary Longacre; Dave Martin; Susan Mukai; Dean Nakano; Kiana Otsuka; Gernot Presting; Ryan Ringuette; Katie Rooney; Julie Yunker.

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.
- 2. Roll Call:** All five Commissioners were present. Quorum was established.
- 3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of August 31, 2021 and September 16, 2021:**
  - The August 31, 2021 meeting minutes were adopted (**AYE:** All; **NAY:** None; **ABSTAIN:** None).
  - The meeting minutes of September 16, 2021 were unavailable and will be voted on at the Commission's next meeting.
- 4. Communications and Correspondence from the Public:** None.
- 5. Report on the Activities of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR):**

Deputy Director Nicola Hedge presented the following report:

- Executive Director Matt Gonser is in New York attending the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative with the Managing Director, which the Mayor is also participating in.
- Energy Efficiency Day on October 6 was marked with a mayoral proclamation, City Council resolution, and an event hosted by CCSR and Hawai'i Energy to highlight energy efficiency grants and resources available to the community.
- CCSR continues to do outreach to seek input on the Better Buildings Energy and Water Benchmarking Program and welcomes engagement from other interested stakeholders. CCSR aims to introduce a bill at City Council next spring. The program is intended to help building owners and occupants understand energy and water performance relative to other buildings and identify opportunities to cut energy and water waste and save money.
- CCSR continues to work to secure additional resources to leverage limited public funds to implement the O'ahu Resilience Strategy and Climate Action Plan:
  - CCSR has three congressionally directed spending projects still in consideration at the federal level for projects around public fleet electrification, electric vehicle charging, and

- o urban forestry.
- o CCSR has extended its American Cities Climate Challenge partnership, which is providing in-kind support for energy, transportation, and Complete Streets work.
- o CCSR's Food Security & Sustainability Program Manager secured a U.S. Department of Agriculture award for a Chinatown food recovery and waste reduction project in coordination with the Department of Environmental Services and community partners.
- CCSR is currently hiring for:
  - o AmeriCorps VISTA Leader;
  - o Climate Resilience & Equity Manager; and
  - o Hazard Mitigation & Long-Term Disaster Recovery Program Manager.

**Questions and comments that followed:**

1. Vice Chair Alegado asked if CCSR is preparing to apply for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding in the next funding cycle. Deputy Director Hedge responded that the previous Hazard Mitigation & Long-Term Disaster Recovery Program Manager had been working on sharing more information City-wide regarding opportunities and lessons learned from last rounds, as well as supporting departments in identifying potentially successful projects.

**Comments and public testimony that followed:** None.

**6. Presentation on the State Climate Commission's Social and Climate Vulnerability Framework by James McCallen, Energy Affordability Specialist, Climate Ready Hawai'i and Hawai'i State Energy Office VISTA**

- Commissioner Coffman presented an overview of the project:
  - o The Climate Commission's equity mission is to identify equity as one of the three primary considerations for climate action and urges all government entities in Hawai'i to identify, recognize, and address any inequitable distribution of benefits, burdens, and processes caused by climate change impacts and policy interventions.
  - o The purpose of the project is to review best practices in vulnerability data and indicators related to climate change and identify appropriate social and economic vulnerability indicators for Hawai'i.
  - o The project conceptualized vulnerability by using a framework to assess root causes, dynamic pressures, and unsafe conditions then layered by exposure.
  - o There are existing indicators and indexes available in Hawai'i:
    - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Risk Index
    - Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index
    - CCSR O'ahu Social Vulnerability Index
    - Aloha United Way ALICE Map
    - Department of Energy Low-Income Energy Affordability Data Tool
    - Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool
- James McCallen reviewed some of the tools assessed in development of a white paper to support the project. He noted the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index tool is the main building block used by many other tools, including CCSR's O'ahu Social Vulnerability Index, which also includes an additional indicator on exposure to hazards such as tsunamis, flooding, and sea level rise.
- Commissioner Coffman shared that the project's current phase includes breaking down available data and understanding the usefulness of existing indicators. She noted some project next steps include evaluating how vulnerability indicators can be combined with exposure information to help guide equitable decision-making and the values and tradeoffs between aggregated indexes and separate indicators.

**Questions and comments that followed:**

1. Chair Fletcher noted potential application of such tools in a carbon fee and dividend in relation to how a dividend is distributed and scaled. Chair Fletcher asked if there are communities elsewhere that have actualized such vulnerability data. McCallen responded that the project will be getting additional perspective from stakeholders and communities who have varying

- experience with using the tools to get more insight on how applicable they are and in what ways.
2. Commissioner Islam noted her interest in understanding how the tools tie to household economics and energy burden.
  3. Vice Chair Alegado commented that the project should consider engaging the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Wai'anae Neighborhood Board. McCallen responded that quantitative data is just one piece of understanding the full vulnerability framework and the project goal is to match it with qualitative, place-based information based on engagement with community leaders.
  4. Commissioner Keener shared the National Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Resilience Evaluation and Siting Tool (<https://toolkit.climate.gov/tool/coastal-resilience-evaluation-and-siting-tool-crest>) that includes data layers to identify sites for resilience hubs.
  5. Chair Fletcher asked if any layers related to wildfire were included. McCallen responded that FEMA's hazard indicator includes wildfire.
  6. Chair Fletcher suggested reviewing the Rainfall Atlas of Hawai'i (<http://rainfall.geography.hawaii.edu/>).

**Comments and public testimony that followed:**

1. Nancy McPherson (Department of Hawaiian Homelands) shared that she is going to participate in one of the project's focus groups. She also noted that it would be interesting to see the project analyze where Hawaiian Homelands land is included. She also shared that she will be presenting to the Hawaiian Homes Commission, which asked for a deep dive on climate change. She commented that, related to social capital and social network factors, particularly for the outer islands, even with high poverty levels there are high social network factors. Vice Chair Alegado commented that it is important not to think about vulnerability with only a deficit mindset.
2. Kiana Otsuka (O'ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)) shared that O'ahu MPO has prioritization process in place to help its board decide what transportation projects to fund and hopes to incorporate a greater emphasis on hazard exposure and those more vulnerable in the hazard exposure area to help prioritize projects that would improve the resilience of the transportation system.
3. Nicola Hedge shared that through the Climate Ready O'ahu project, CCSR will be adding indicators to the O'ahu Social Vulnerability Index around adaptive capacity related to access to food, access to medical care, access to evacuation space, quality of housing, and greenness. Commissioner Coffman commented that a presentation on that work could be on a future meeting agenda.
4. Nicola Hedge commented that cities and states are using U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development qualified census tract metrics in consideration of distribution of American Rescue Plan Act funding.

**7. Presentation on the State Climate Commission's Grants-to-Projects Bridge by Parker Kushima, Transportation Affordability Specialist, Climate Ready Hawai'i and Hawai'i State Energy Office VISTA**

- Parker Kushima presented on the background and components of the Grants-to-Projects Bridge tool:
  - The Grants-to-Projects Bridge is a resource that was put together to help direct decision-making and investments to priority climate-smart infrastructure in Hawai'i.
  - The tool compiles information about resilience and natural working lands projects and active, clean, and multi-modal transportation projects in Hawai'i, as well as the federal and local grants relevant to the projects with the intent to make all information accessible to both the public and government agencies and streamline funding processes.
  - There are three main components to the tool available on the Climate Commission's website (<https://climate.hawaii.gov/grants-to-projects-bridge/>): (1) a spreadsheet of detailed resilience projects; (2) a spreadsheet of detailed transportation projects; and (3) a spreadsheet of grants.
- Kushima noted that project and grant lists are non-exhaustive and do not reflect the full need of projects to be funded or available grants, but just those identified in the process of creating the tool.
- Kushima noted that compilation of the projects and information in the tool does not add a layer of

- prioritization in addition to the priorities as identified in planning documents.
- Kushima demonstrated use of the transportation and resilience projects spreadsheets, which include total sample project costs, a project list with cost breakdowns by island, and project categorization (e.g., pedestrian, bicycle, and multimodal). The spreadsheet also includes additional tabs that detail the various plans where projects were sourced from.
- Kushima reviewed the grants spreadsheet, which includes links to funding source websites, average award amount, and contact information.
- Kushima reviewed the project's provenance document that includes an overview and intent of the project with additional information about the various plans and projects included in the tool.
- Kushima shared next steps for the project which include finding ways to regularly update the tool, increasing accessibility through a web-integrated database, potential expansion of scope to other project types, and additional interactive graphics for better visualization of overall need for funding across the state.

**Questions and comments that followed:**

1. Chair Fletcher noted the importance of sharing the tool through available networks and making sure community is aware of the resource.
2. Commissioner Islam commented on how the tool demonstrates the need and funding deficit. She noted that it would be good to update the tool as costs escalate. She noted that in addition to community awareness, it would be helpful to engage the State Legislature in understanding priority funding. She commented that it would be interesting to see overlap between the Grants-to-Projects Bridge and the Climate Vulnerability & Equity Framework to add nuance to why projects are needed and how to prioritize them. Kushima responded that an area for improvement and inclusion for the project is highlighting the equity components either by further detailing the equity components of the various plans' prioritization processes or adopting a lens for the entire tool.
3. Vice Chair Alegado commented that it's important to figure out how the project will live on. Kushima responded that in development of the tool, there has been a lot of collaboration between state and county agencies and departments and those relationships will be important for helping the work live on.

**Comments and public testimony that followed:** None.

**8. Update on the Climate Change and Construction Industry Guidance Document**

- Commissioner Keener shared that following the stakeholder meeting held last summer, input from different sectors was received and the document continued to be revised until Commissioner Bettina Mehnert, who was a co-author on the document, transitioned off of the Commission. Revisions included better communication of goals to the mayor, City Council, and executive agencies with actionable recommendations to better inform implementation of policy and alignment with the City's Climate Action Plan and forthcoming Building Benchmarking Program. Additional revisions include examples of policies and incentives from other U.S. cities that have reduced greenhouse gas emissions from building operations and construction.
- Commissioner Islam confirmed her ability to join Commissioner Keener as the second author on the document.
- Commissioner Keener shared that once revised, the draft will be re-shared with stakeholder groups that were consulted in the workshop and survey processes.
- Commissioner Keener shared that the Commission has been working with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Architecture, Hawai'i Sea Grant, and Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute to review and revise the document.

**9. Public Input for Matters Not on the Agenda:** None.

**10. Tentative Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting date is scheduled for November 23, 2021 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

**11. Announcements:**

1. Chair Fletcher announced he will be attending COP 26 in Glasgow.
2. Chair Fletcher shared an article he wrote that was published in Civil Beat regarding current climate action at the federal level (<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/10/when-will-joe-manchin-care-about-global-warming/>).
3. Commissioner Keener shared that the Fifth National Climate Assessment, which is released approximately every four years by the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), is currently being written. Commissioner Keener is an author on the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands chapter. She announced that USGCRP is planning for public engagement around each of the chapters. The virtual workshop on the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands chapter will be held the week of January 24, 2022.

**12. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 AM.