

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Climate Equity for an Island Future: Infusing Oahu's Resilience Strategy with Climate Change Action*

- **Year Complete:** 2021
- **Local Government:** City of Honolulu, HI
- **Local Foundation:** Hawaii Community Foundation

Project Purpose

To create a clear, ambitious, and achievable climate action and adaptation plan that addresses O'ahu's unique cost of living and climate impact vulnerabilities while serving as a model for climate planning throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

- This project spanned a mayoral transition and a change in the majority of the City Council, as well as significant staff changes in the Office and almost all directors of other City departments. This required slowing down to reorient stakeholders to the Climate Action Plan (CAP). This time proved crucial to its release by Mayor and unanimous adoption at Council. Like with community, we can move at the speed of trust.
- As a new office, the team learned about the time it takes for procurement. Contractors have been critical, but it also took a lot of time across the City, community, and Office to make these plans possible. The need for innovation in financing is critical to successfully implement plans.
- Community engagement during a pandemic is hard, but not impossible. The team took an island-wide in person workshops planned for March, April and May of 2020 virtual. This was less than ideal but still fruitful. Many lessons about virtual outreach will stick, at least as options, moving forward.
- There is still work to be done to build community faith in this CAP. Enhancing affordability is a top community concern along with advancing community-based resilience and sustainability work. It would have been better to start the CAP process with community-driven priorities versus the technical side of climate mitigation, but the team has since adjusted processes.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

- The local community foundation has proven an incredibly important ally, not just for this and other aligned funding, but as a thematic partner, connector, and champion.

Additional Information and Resources

Learn more about the newly developed [Climate Action Plan](#) and [Adaptation Strategy](#) for the island of O'ahu.