City and County of Honolulu Storm Water Utility Formation Stakeholder Advisory Group

December 9, 2019

Webinar Summary

ATTENDEES

Advisory Group Members

American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawaii (June Nakamura)
Fresh Water Council (Yvonne Izu)
Hawai'i Association of Watershed Partnerships (Shelly Gustafson)
Hawaii Reserves, Inc. (Jeff Tyau)
Kamehameha Schools (Gary Evora)
Neighborhood Board #4 (Sharon Schneider)
Neighborhood Board #24 (Sharlette Poe)
Neighborhood Board #25 (Bernie Marcos)
Sustainable Coastlines (Rafael Bergstrom)
The Nature Conservancy (Mark Fox)
Waikiki Business Improvement District (Jennifer Nakayama)

Public Agency Staff

Ross Sasamura (City and County of Honolulu Department of Facility Maintenance)
Randall Wakumoto (City and County of Honolulu Department of Facility Maintenance)
Russell Leong (City and County of Honolulu Department of Facility Maintenance)

Consultant Team

Juli Beth (JB) Hinds (Birchline Planning LLC)
Joan Isaacson (Kearns and West)
Laurens van der Tak (Jacobs)
Ming Ding (AECOM)
Jessica Chiam (AECOM)
Cami Kloster (G70)

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Welcome and Roundtable Alohas

Facilitator Joan Isaacson welcomed everyone to the webinar and reviewed the overall timeline and meeting map for the stakeholder advisory group process.

2. Webinar and Agenda Overview

The purpose of the webinar was to provide updates on community outreach, offer presentations to advisory group member meetings, and discuss revised values and preliminary impervious surface data.

3. Community Outreach

The first round of community meetings will be in February and early March. Two guiding principles for choosing locations were: 1) accessibility and 2) ability to gain input from different parts of the island. A meeting schedule will be provided, and meeting format will be discussed at the January Stakeholder Advisory group meeting.

The full website will be launched at the January meeting.

4. Presentations to Advisory Groups

If you would like a presentation on the storm water utility for your organization, please let Randall know. Presentations provide an opportunity to provide input to constituents – and for them to offer feedback.

5. Revised Values Statements

Great feedback on the values statements was received during the last Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting and from Advisory Group members afterwards via Randall. Those comments have been considered and incorporated into to a revised version of the values.

Juli Beth Hinds proposed that there could be short and long versions of the values statements. Comments were especially requested on values slide in the webinar presentation. Also, input on benchmarks was solicited.

Comments

Appreciation was expressed for having a shortened version of the values.

Suggested items to include in the next version of the values:

- Land / water connection. Background on storm water quality effects.
- Ocean health under Clean Water or Healthy and Safe Environment.

6. Updates Impervious Surface Analysis

Impervious cover is the foundation of a storm water utility fee. Courts have accepted the amount of impervious cover as an equivalent for customer use / demand on the system. O‘ahu data shows impervious area for most areas of the island.

Residential properties equal 49% of impervious area; commercial properties equal 19%, 16% of properties are government lands, with about 9% federal and 7% state; faith-based organizations equal about 15% of impervious cover.

A combination of data sources are used including City and County of Honolulu Department of Planning & Permitting building footprint data, which is updated continuously, and Smart Trees Pacific data from 2013 that was used to develop the tree canopy data for the southern 1/3 of Oahu.

The information presented on the webinar is a preview of the information to be shared at the January stakeholder advisory group meeting. The project team is working on fees, rates

and credits in preparation for the meeting. How much different property owners would pay depends the desired storm water programs and credits offered.

Q&A/Discussion

- Isn't this data a snapshot in time?
    - Yes. Remote sensing data is done at one point in time. The data set does include building footprint data that is continuously being updated by the Department of Planning & Permitting. The data serves as a baseline and updates can be added. Storm water utilities update their datasets on a pre-determined basis, typically every 5-6 years.
- How might new developments that are paving over entire lots be handled?
    - The more you pave, the more you pay. Storm water fees are related to the amount of impervious cover and not usually to the percent of impervious cover.
    - Regulation of the percentage of a lot that can be paved is not done through storm water fees. Zoning is the legal method available to address the allowable percent of lot coverage. Perhaps in some areas, there could be surcharge for percent of lot covered; however, this would require very specific data and would add administrative burden. This could be explored with the Department of Planning & Permitting in the future.
    - Credits are another way to incentivize people to reduce total imperviousness and manage storm water on their property.
- How do the fee tiers work in other jurisdictions?
    - Older storm water utilities typically use "tiers" or ranges of impervious surface based on an "Equivalent Residential Unit," or the estimated amount of impervious surface associated with a typical single-family house.
    - Using the exact amount of impervious cover on a lot to establish a fee is the most equitable system; however, for ease of administration, tiers or groupings can be used for properties with less total impervious surface (say up to 7,000 square feet [SF]). In each tier, properties with between (as an example) 1,000 and 2,000 square feet would pay one rate; and then bills for properties with more than the "cut-off" amount of impervious cover (7,000 SF in this example) would pay based on the amount of impervious cover on site.
- Is there a difference in the number of tiers in a system and how the credits work?
    - Tiers do affect credits that can be taken. If a typical smaller property is being charged its fee based on its "tier," it would take more of a change in the amount of impervious cover to make the credit worthwhile. For example, a property with 2,800 SF of impervious cover in a 2,000 – 3,000 SF tier would have to reduce its impervious cover by over 800 SF to get into the lower billing tier. A property with 18,000 SF of impervious cover would get a lower bill by reducing as little as 1,000 SF of impervious cover – a much smaller percentage of the total impervious area.
    - The amount of credit implementation is usually a factor of how high the fee is and the cost and ease of implementing the credit. Properties with large

impervious areas who are paying based on the amount of impervious surface on site, rather than a tier, may be far more still be motivated to obtain a credit.
    - Rebates are a one-time offset or payment for a "good action." Credits are ongoing as they treat storm water going forward.

- What are typical the rates per 1,000 square feet?
    - There is a huge range of rates on the U.S. continent. Juli Beth will be providing the link to the Western Kentucky University annual survey of rates to everyone.

https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=seas_faculty_pubs

    - Charging based on 1,000 SF promotes equity because impervious area – regardless of land use – is treated the same.

- Will the DPP residential projections be presented at January meeting? Will they be factored into the rates? There might be a perception that we are overcharging because there is new revenue that will come online in the future.
    - If new units constructed, there will be new costs and new revenue. They would incur the existing rate when they come online.
    - The team will include major proposed developments in the estimates of total impervious cover and revenue to be received over the implementation of the project.
    - Most jurisdictions look at new impervious area every 6-8 years, typically with new remote sensing data.
    - It would take a lot of new units with impervious area to affect the overall amount of impervious surface and cause a change in the rate calculation.

- Is the goal to continue to have a storm water fee, no matter how "green" we get? Do we have goals/benchmarks of what we want the utility to achieve?
    - There can be program elements that if effectively managed can bring down project costs. Examples include catch-up costs, illicit discharge elimination, and trash retrofits. This concept of implementing enough to achieve a goal, and then having a reduced cost, should incorporated into the values statement or operating principles.

- How do we keep these goals in mind for infrastructure maintenance, repair, replacement and upgrades? How do we keep moving along a path of stewardship?
    - The team and stakeholders discussed doing a visioning exercise at the March or May workshops to establish a 60-year horizon in mind to consider what success would look like.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be January 13, 2020 at either the Mayor's Conference Room or the Hawaii Community Foundation. The meeting topics will be fee, revenue and impacts, as well as details on the upcoming community meetings.