



PRESS RELEASE
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DEPARTMENT OF FACILITY MAINTENANCE
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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O‘ahu Storm Water Utility to hold virtual community meetings

HONOLULU — The City and County of Honolulu will hold a series of virtual community meetings about the proposed storm water utility for O‘ahu. This second round of meetings will be held from May 20 through May 30 and is intended to solicit further feedback from the public.

“Our communities are experiencing significant impact and hardship from COVID-19. After discussion with the Mayor and other city leaders, our department is proposing a revised approach to the introduction of a storm water utility for O‘ahu,” said Ross Sasamura, Director and Chief Engineer of the City’s Department of Facility Maintenance (DFM), which is overseeing the study.

The revised approach, which includes a proposal to delay any new fees related to a storm water utility, will be addressed in the upcoming meetings. Meetings will be held online and will include a slideshow presentation, a question and answer portion, and polling questions.

The virtual meetings are set for the following dates and are expected to last two hours:

- Wednesday, May 20 at 5:30 p.m.
- Thursday, May 21 at 2 p.m.
- Friday, May 22 at 10 a.m.
- Saturday, May 23 at 10:30 a.m.
- Monday, May 25 at 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 26 at 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 27 at 8 a.m.
- Thursday, May 28 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, May 30 at 2 p.m.

People can participate by clicking this link during the meeting times: StormWaterUtilityOahu.org.

Storm water utilities provide municipalities with dedicated funding available exclusively for storm water management purposes. There are more than 2,000 of these utilities across the nation. A storm water utility will allow the DFM to address runoff water quality, minimize pollution from construction sites,

provide regular stream clearing, support ways to replenish the aquifer, and address local nuisance flooding through green infrastructure projects, among other issues.

Later this summer, the DFM will present a bill to the City Council that would establish the utility. The bill will include provisions to delay any payment of storm water utility fees until July 1, 2022 or later and be contingent upon economic recovery indicators. The bill will also include deadlines for DFM to complete an island-wide Storm Water Master Plan, a detailed credit program, and a plan for geographic re-investment in O‘ahu’s communities.

“To improve transparency and accountability, we will recommend that the City Council establish a Storm Water Special Fund which will include restrictions for use on storm water related expenses only,” Sasamura said. “This special fund will be the foundation for the utility when it becomes fully enacted and operational. Revenues collected by the City and County of Honolulu for storm water related matters will be deposited into the Storm Water Special Fund and future budget appropriations for storm water management, repair, and maintenance will draw from the special fund.”

More information on the study and upcoming virtual meetings can be found on the website. To get updates, community members can provide their contact information at www.StormWaterUtilityOahu.org.

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