

Fourth Equity Meeting Notes

January 29, 2024

9am-Noon

Meeting #4

Equity Improvements for the IGP RFP: Co-Creation and Community Energy Boards

Agenda

- Welcome
- Message of Aloha
- Agenda and meeting overview
- Introduction from the Energy Equity Hui
- Presentation: Community Co-Creation
 - Break-out groups
- Break
- Presentation: Community Energy Boards
 - Break-out groups
- Wrap-up
- Closing and next steps

Notes

- Welcome and introductions.
- Energy Equity Hui - introductions
 - The working group presenting today is a subsection of the EEH that includes a cross sector of developers, non-profits, utility, etc.
 - EEH is a community of practice
 - EEH RFP WG filed an 18 page letter in the PUC Equity docket w/ 2 key ideas
 - 1. A recommendation to retool the RFP process through co-design with community to create the RFP
 - 2. Create a community energy board
 - Introductions by Stephanie and Lauren - grounding in why we are here.
 - Energy is a life force - energy is our shared genealogy
 - Solutions being presented today activate community technology
 - The expertise that comes from knowing the place and the people intimately
 - Community-driven solutions are part of Hawaii's genealogy. These are relatively new (2014), and allows community to apply their traditional knowledge to make rules for state management.
 - For example, off of Waikiki you cannot catch live fish in odd years. But local communities know when a certain type of fish spawns, so you would want to incorporate that knowledge into those laws.
 - Hoahu Energy Cooperative on Molokai: Formed in 2020, this is an energy customer co-op that will be providing 20% of Molokai's energy needs
 - Molokai CERAP began in 2021 - it's a great capture of a lot of work.
 - Community co-creation looks like this - poring over information, creating maps, and working together to develop understanding
 - Community co-creation can solve many of the problems with our existing RFP structure (4 out of 5 problems). It simplifies things.

- Walk through of the current RFP process - community engagement begins after the award is given. The proposal is to do work with community upfront.
- “What would you like to see in a project”?
- Competencies necessary for carrying out co-creation:
 - Community expertise & technical expertise
 - Community planning expertise/technical expertise/resource expert advisors > community leadership team/CEB/community expertise > community residents
- 2 years total: Develop the RFP > Land identification process > consensus
- Time is needed to engage communities meaningfully
- Community energy boards
 - Context setting: image aligns with the definitions provided by the PUC earlier in the docket - justice needs to be at the core of the transition. This is an invitation to think about decision-makers different and work “bottom up”.
 - Energy resources are a part of the public trust.
 - Community energy board: overview
 - CEB provides seats at the table, embeds transparency and community values, infrastructure design informed by place-based knowledge, holistic and long-term consideration of choices, proactive/collaborative/solution-oriented platform.
 - E.g. interactions between hydroelectric power and farming - and farmers have good knowledge to share.
 - CEB could host meetings, provide oversight on procurement processes (could sign NDAs), coordinate site visits/educational events/etc., forum for community-led benefits packages, etc.
 - Where could the CEB go? No right answer. We are providing some ideas and examples to start the conversation.
 - CEB needs to be able to hold space for community collaboration (e.g. community charrettes for transportation planning)
 - Could the CEB be part of the Consumer Advocate or Independent Observer?
 - Structure: Hawaii Commission on Water Resource Management example - volunteers have different backgrounds, appointed by the Gov & confirmed; provides decisions on specific issues.
 - Other examples: island-specific burial councils; issue-specific boards (Red Hill community representative initiative); Molokai Clean Energy Hui (do a good job at checking back in with the larger community).
 - Renewable Energy Zone map: interactive map that allows community to put in comments to help the utility identify opportunities & challenges.
 - Regional representation and Mokus: can use ahupuaa thinking to move away from extractive thinking - can we add in community-led REZ zones? Could we think about regions with regards to consumption patterns and production capabilities? Set maximum and minimum generation capabilities?

Note: this section of notes corresponds to the two breakout group activities. Groups used the website Menti to record results to answers. Those results are shared verbatim below with the exception of the immediately following breakout group which opted to use notes instead.

Community Co-Creation – Group 1

- Grappling with equipping community with information & interactions with the competitive bidding framework - community is independently exploring technical viability/cost and aren't necessarily choosing the cheapest options (e.g. looking at safety, environmental goals, economic development, etc.). Energy solutions not to meet energy needs, but to meet community needs. Developer has had to be as adaptable as possible to provide legal & technical support needed by the community. What is the opportunity to be creative & adaptable while meeting basic requirements? Where does the discussion on being more adaptable begin?
- Looking at IGP - how do we ensure conformity with the IGP needs as we pursue modifications?
- What has been presented is critically important & there are complications (e.g. Molokai is a relatively small community & is unique; compare to IGP where Oahu has decided on RPS goals to get off of imported FFs & develop indigenous resources & bring down costs). Challenging to integrate these multiple needs while integrating community needs; developers typically need to identify site. The question is how do we bring to bear the community dimension into large-scale developments that are closer to the community (and aren't out of sight/out of mind). How do you meet the baseload/other needs with co-design (i.e. for larger projects that are essential for clean energy goals)?
- Are doing some work on Oahu > bigger projects; community ownership component changes the way that communities engage with co-design, but there is a rub with how to get financing.

Community Co-Creation – Group 2

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

Encourage developers to fold co design in through more points. This way it can be unique per project versus setting rigid RFP process

Early engagement by utility on scoping and required early engagement by developers before bids are submitted

spend more time conducting various community engagement activities early in the process

Engage communities to identify acceptable locations and requirements to site projects in an RFP

What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

Having a long upfront process won't allow us to meet the grids needs. Also need to be able to do what needs to be done from technical point

Determining and siting of new transmission infrastructure to enable new projects to connect

longer process may not always be most desirable to community members who may burn out with lengthier meetings and engagement

Getting to a clear consensus from the co-creation process

Community Co-Creation – Group 3

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

<p>I think we could participate in getting the word out there, and be a neutral leader in the process that keeps the goals on track and helps make sure the developer and community voices are heard</p>	<p>Provide information about energy sources (eg. Solar) and impacts (both positive and negative) that the community requests.</p>	<p>Break down the information to the median educational level of the zip code.</p>	<p>Community surveys</p>
<p>HSEO has the people and expertise to assist communities with information they need to participate (Energize Kakou and Wayfinders).</p>	<p>Public engagement and education about foundational energy topics. Wayfinders play a big role in this.</p>	<p>Sharing and talking about these meetings and getting those people involved, and providing information of why a project needs to happen</p>	

What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

<p>Having staff representation at community meetings.</p>	<p>Making sure the process is equitable and inclusive. That's the overall goal but executing isn't always easy/black and white</p>	<p>Having classes in civil civic engagement in the energy sphere</p>	<p>Coordination at the state/county/industry/community levels. Compensation for community leaders who are engaged.</p>
<p>Legislation supporting community co-creation.</p>	<p>The fact that you can not please everyone, but the project still need to happen and in a timely manner. How do these two opposing needs get addressed</p>	<p>The fact that you can not please everyone, but the project still need to happen and in a timely manner. How do these two opposing needs get addressed</p>	<p>What is the definition and scope of community? How would conflict among communities be addressed? How does the process align with energy strategy, developer and permitting deadlines?</p>

Community Co-Creation – Group 4

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

<p>Considering the ideas and thoughts that have been presented to see what is applicable when thinking through what can be done to increase community involvement.</p>	<p>Upon receipt of Federal funds under the Solar for All program, HGIA can assist with community outreach.</p>
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What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

Based on the presentations provided, I foresee challenges in classifying what is the appropriate "community" that should be engaged for purposes of soliciting engagement and participation.

Community Co-Creation - Group 5

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

Not approving HECO's RFP until this happens.

Make it a requirement to have community input included in the first draft RFP from the utility. This way community outreach by the utility has to start at the very beginning.

Basic education and awareness to the community; Getting the word out via our website; asking the utility to publish info on meetings or point to web info on customer bills in the affected community

Listen carefully to community participants with an unbiased attitude.

Continue to allow opportunities for the everyone to express their opinions/views.

What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

Keeping on track with our RPS and other goals to bring projects online.

Funding; staff resources to participate; having mandates or rules that require the Commission to consider community input as part of the RFP process

Having equitable response from the public, ex. affected/non affected communities. Some people like to comment and some that should comment do not comment. How to get equitable responses ?

communicate actions/decisions that may not be want to hear.

Implementing changes in accordance with the opinions/views presented by everyone.

Finding a monetary value for community co-creation

Community Co-Creation – Group 6

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

Talk it up to our networks. Inspire/recruit more involvement	Do a better job at educating community members about the RFP process, more grassroots engagement and outreach	Elevate this discussion into professional forums we're a part of to increase awareness and support (i.e. HI Energy Conference, WIRE events, other industry events)	Get the word out about the process and how to get involved.
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What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

Capacity. We have a team of 5 staff, and none are community organizers	Form a hui formally tasked with participation that advocates for community concerns.	I find it hard to engage people with experience because they felt dismissed in the past. They have little or no trust that participation now in this process will resolve in better decisions later	The easiest thing we can do is not give up. Stay engaged.
Building trust takes time	Engage people in way that does not result in a specialized, isolated group with a privileged voice.		

Community Co-Creation – Group 7

What is a small action ("easy") your organization could take to see community co-creation succeed?

N/A	I did not feel that I had adequate amount of time to digest the slide information.	How is the community defined? This is a question that we still need to clarify.	Having community meetings during the late afternoon or on weekends and inform the community of the meetings in ways that are more visible (mailers, phone calls, etc)
How will community involvement be measured, and who will be measuring it?			

What is a bigger, harder, more challenging lift for you or your organization to see community co-creation succeed?

Balancing community interests with the best interests of all ratepayers.	N/A	N/A	Our role as an advocate for all ratepayers means that we are taking in all perspectives.
Our role as an advocate for all ratepayers means that we are taking in all perspectives.	How is community in this "co-design" being defined?	How will the PUC know that the community was adequately represented in the process?	Currently create bi monthly newsletters that provide regulated utility information that is digestible for the average consumers

<p>Outreach into community - in the form of monthly presentations on utility programs and resources</p>	<p>constrained by statute §269-51</p>	<p>Without a clear definition of "community," can cause unintended harm to ratepayers and government agencies</p>	<p>The diagram says "Co-Creation" but Company is designing community engagement?</p>
<p>Building trust</p>	<p>The diagram says "Co-Creation" but Company is designing community engagement?</p>	<p>Where is the opportunity for an iterative approach? This looks prescriptive.</p>	<p>How is the PUC increasing the community's capacity to participate in regulatory proceedings?</p>
<p>We do not see an improvement in making the regulatory process more transparent and understandable to community members</p>	<p>What are ways in which communities can "appeal" when they feel that the regulatory process has excluded them or did not adequately consider their concerns?</p>	<p>What other jurisdictions has the PUC looked at as a model for more procedural equity?</p>	<p>Michigan has grants available to communities: https://www.cesa.org/resource-library/resource/partnering-to-reduce-energy-burden-michigan/</p>
<p>What is the Hui's role in representing the community? Should they be a more formal entity to participate in dockets? Currently the HSEO is facilitating the group.</p>	<p>I'm not seeing an improvement in this docket of increased community representation much less participation.</p>	<p>How does the PUC handle public comments for the RFP process?</p>	<p>It would be great to have the slides ahead of time so we could have time to review closely.</p>
<p>We were told that we were going to have our own breakout group but we did not know that the PUC was going to have a staff member too, and another outside person so it was hard to have a deep convo.</p>	<p>Many government agencies are constrained by statute so how can we improve the process within our constraints?</p>	<p>John Boland was placed in our breakout session but was not sure if he should have been in our group since we were supposed to have a discussion among DCA staff.</p>	<p>The idea of formulating a community energy board with only the input of government agencies, the utility, developers and interest groups is iffy. Need more input from community members.</p>
<p>Three hour meetings are a big commitment for our staff. Wondering if there are other ways to structure these moving forward.</p>			

Community Co-Creation in Hawaii RFPs

Please share what you like about upfront community co-creation as a solution for Hawaii's RFP process.

Early engagement	Giving the community decision-making role	Seems like a win-win solution for engaging community early on and then providing for a smooth RFP process.	Long-time coming. This is so necessary in Hawaii.
I think it's a great idea, as long as implemented. Community should be involved at the forefront of this	Reduces risk of delays later in the process	Hopefully it would reduce impediments during development of projects.	It gives community a seat at the table and real decision-making power. Involves community from the start of the process.
Community perspective and needs being put first	Involve and engage residents on solutions.	It radically shifts the current pro-utility and pro-developer process that forces the community to react to pre-determined projects.	I think it can do a lot to prevent certain communities from feeling edged out/excluded from the process
iterative process	Space for input from communities on their interests	It conveys the value that is placed on the voices of residents in their future	I think we should support community from the grassroots. The policy / planning / procurement framework should not be an obstacle to this.
promotes more meaningful (early) feedback from community members on the project	I like that it is upfront and co-creative.	I like that it gets input of a lot of people in the community so we can get solutions that are more aligned with community wants and goals	It would limit delays and pushback against projects later in the process
Giving the community a voice in projects that will impact them	Provides for meaningful, equitable community engagement and feedback in for energy sector. Complete transformation of our current RFP process. Helps to address past harms caused by energy projects.	Involves community early, but how to get everyone involved?	I think it makes so much logical sense for community to define project details and would expedite the RFP process later on

If community is truly co-creating the process, then this is a good idea. But if it's still a top-down approach, then I find it problematic.

better ideas for project design because more local knowledge included in the design process

offers the advantages of inclusivity, tapping into local knowledge, fostering holistic solutions, enhancing trust and transparency, improving implementation and adoption, and promoting resilience

I think community co-creation goes beyond the RFP. Yes, RFP should accommodate community, but so should the rest of the process, before and after.

Under this model, will communities have the ability to say no to projects?

While upfront co-creation may be ideal, the challenge is how to practically do this. Pre-solicitation RFP documents are publicly available, voluminous, and takes hours/days to review... challenging.

Please share concerns you have about upfront community co-creation as a solution for Hawaii's RFP process.

I'm concerned that there's only one other citizen here besides me.

When should land identification occur?

We go through all of this genuinely community-based co-creation and someone is still unhappy in the end and sues to stop the project

That the co-design will not be accessible enough to have robust participation

I am unclear on how this "upfront community co-creation" actually looks like in practice, and what our role as stakeholders are.

Lack of full/sufficient community participation. Only includes those who are already in the loop. Not being taken seriously by gov/industry.

None really except if somehow it became that the community involvement would be advisory rather than decision-making/shaping the process and energy design.

Curious how this would interact with the utility planning process, who would pay for the co-creation process, and how the co-creation plan would be vetted from a technical standpoint.

I'm concerned that the current proposed process might be too involved with the incumbent utility.

impact on time and expense of the project - which may create extra (energy and cost) burden on ratepayers ultimately

Accessibility.

Generation replacement is needed to ensure reliability of grid so process timing has to factor in needs of grid and technical feasibility. How do you define community and consensus.

NIMBY > YIMBY

It may take too long to incorporate

Lack of community involvement due to distrust in government. Lack of outreach to get community involved, involvement by those which represent actual community rather than favorable "community"

It is challenging to build community consensus and takes a significant investment of time and money to execute well. We also want to see accountability beyond the RFP.

Some of our communities are so divided, finding "consensus" will be a challenge. There should be some financial support to the community leadership group as this will be a very time-consuming process

Confidential nature of bidding process will be jeopardized, if project specifics are shared with communities before projects are submitted to the RFP

Process should organically develop from the community. By requiring this for all projects, it becomes its own top-down approach.

Who leads/facilitates the upfront community co-creation process? i.e. Whose responsibility is it to carry their ideas forward to make it into the RFP

ensuring "the community voice" is adequately heard and represented

Who will pay for the community projects?

how will conflicted positions/perspectives within communities be managed?

There is always a problem that you can't please everyone and not everyone who wants to get involved can get involved. Also balancing it with urgency

Making sure there are multiple opportunities and degrees of engagement like Moloka'i did. It has to be accessible, open, transparent, and comprehensive: at schools as well.

There is still no actual community involvement.

Process itself should be designed by the community itself.

There is a REAL learning curve on how to conduct comprehensive community co-design. People need to make the time and space to learn new skills.

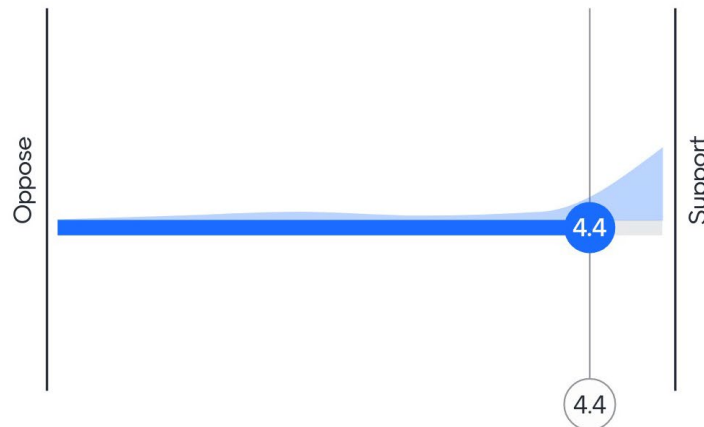
Accessibility for community to be involved. This meeting for example is on a Monday from 9-12 a 3 hour meeting on a weekday, how inclusive is that?

How many community co-creation processes will there be? Will each community (however defined) result in an individual rfp?

Diversity of community voices will not be well represented

Who will pay for this process? I understand that it can "save" money in the end but someone has to invest in this to begin with.

Please share at this time how in support you are of a pilot to do upfront community co-creation.



- Share-out from the groups:
 - Breakout 1 - talked about the Moku approach and Hawaiian-based knowledge.

- Breakout 2 - smaller boards might be better because they represent their own places, concerns about gaming member selection but discussed that we might be past this & could do well-informed elections.
- Breakout 3 - discussed examples and making sure the board doesn't get less input from communities, transparency is key → didn't have one specific example, but had some ideas for statutes/independent observers that could be analogous to energy.
- Wrap-up:
 - Will have a 5th meeting - staff plan to file a draft of recommendations/summary of this effort. Presentations are invited.
 - Have filed a draft scope of work for consultant & are looking for feedback.
 - End with a word cloud on reactions to how people are feeling about leaving this meeting/this series of meetings.