



State Planning Act Task Force

Meeting #3

MEETING MINUTES

December 18, 2025

1:30 PM – 3:15 PM

Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, 6th Floor Conference Room
State Office Tower – Leiopapa A Kamehameha Building
235 South Beretania Street, Honolulu
and Via Videoconference

Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIpaFIfonis>

All meeting materials are posted at <https://planning.hawaii.gov/spb/hawaii-state-plan-update-phase-2/past-meetings-and-materials/>

Members/Designees Present:

Michelle Ahn, Deputy Director for the County of Hawai'i Planning Department
Mary Alice Evans, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD), Chair
Kate Blystone, Planning Department, County of Maui
Steven Bond-Smith, University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization
Michael Cain, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission
Dawn Chang, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission
Jacqui Hoover, Hawai'i Economic Development Board
Marie Williams, Planning Department, County of Kaua'i
Jackie Kaina, Kaua'i Economic Development Board
Ken Kakesako, Department of Education
Leinā'ala Ley, Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Chris Liu, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, Coastal Zone Management
Dina Wong, Planning Division, City and County of Honolulu
Cat Awakuni Colón, O'ahu Economic Development Board

Members/Designees Excused:

Leslie Wilkins, Maui Economic Development Board

Other Designees/Alternates Present:

OPSD Special Plans Staff:

Scott Allen, OPSD
David Kobayashi, OPSD
Claire McCreery, OPSD
Lauren Primiano, OPSD
Isabelle Sholes, OPSD

Guests:

Vice Speaker Linda Ichiyama, Hawai'i House of Representatives
Representative Mark Hashem, Hawai'i House of Representatives
Josh Wisch, Holomua Collective
Matthew Prellberg, Holomua Collective

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, and Quorum**

Mary Alice Evans, the Director of OPSD and Chair of the Task Force, called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM.

2. **Approval of Minutes from Task Force Meeting #2 on October 30, 2025**

The Draft Meeting Minutes from the Task Force meeting on October 30, 2025 were approved with non-substantive revisions.

3. **Approval of Revised Workplan pursuant to Act 36, SLH 2024 § 2(b)**

OPSD Special Plans Branch Planning Research and Design Analyst Scott Allen provided a walkthrough of the draft two-year workplan for the Task Force's consideration. The workplan is organized into three sections. The Overview section provides context for the Phase II update and outlines the requirements of Act 36, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2024. The Scope of Work section addresses key outcomes, administrative, research, and engagement support, as well as work products. The Approach section details the project's tasks, timeline, and workflow. During the presentation, Allen focused on the Approach section, which describes how the Task Force would accomplish the following tasks:

Task 1: Prepare a preliminary guiding framework and form thematic area Permitted Interaction Groups (PIGs)

Task 2: Prepare thematic area recommendations

Task 3: Prepare the final report to the Legislature

Task 4: Conduct outreach to raise awareness of the proposed update

Following the presentation, Evans called for comments from the Task Force.

Steven Bond-Smith asked whether there was a stage in the workplan for Task Force input on the development of recommendations.

Lauren Primiano responded that the Task Force would play a role through the PIGs, and that two Task Force meetings had been allotted for discussion and deliberation following the PIGs' presentation of findings.

Bond-Smith also asked whether Task Force would be able to deliberate on and contribute to the recommendations, and suggested that if so, the contributions should be described as actions in the workplan.

Primiano deferred to Evans, who asked Bond-Smith whether he was proposing an amendment to the two-year workplan. Bond-Smith explained that he was inquiring if the Task Force would be able to deliberate on or contribute to recommendations. Evans replied that information and action, including recommendations from the PIGs, would be an active conversation among Task Force members.

Leinā'ala Ley asked about the identification of the thematic briefs/areas and if they differed from the functional areas.

Allen responded that work to identify thematic areas would begin in January. He stated that the idea for the thematic areas was to provide an opportunity to consider issues and their framings. Allen added that literature reviews, reviews of state plans/frameworks, and stakeholder interviews would inform the thematic areas.

Clarifying Allen's response, Primiano stated that reviews of state plans would also include reviews of county plans and plans in the general planning ecosystem. She added that this work would result in a preliminary guiding framework which would be proposed following a discussion and summary of research findings at the March 2026 meeting. Primiano also explained that a more formal discussion and deliberation on the preliminary guiding framework would take place at the April 2026 meeting.

Ley then asked if the preliminary guiding framework would reflect suggestions from the Phase I report. Primiano confirmed that it would.

Marie Williams asked whether the scope of the project would include a study on how the counties use the State Plan. Williams pointed out that while updating the content of the State Plan is important, many county planners do not know about the State Plan or how to use it.

In response, Evans suggested that based on the county planning department stakeholder interviews, this topic would likely be reflected in the framework proposed in March and April.

Primiano added that the workflow diagram was a summary version, and that OPSD's internal workflow diagram included a potential PIG on coordination and implementation.

Matthew Prellberg suggested that the Task Force could utilize the Legislature's research agencies, if members of the Legislature were willing, to review the Hawai'i Revised Statutes to find occurrences of Chapter 226.

Evans acknowledged the comment and stated we do have legislative members.

In relation to the workplan and workflow diagram, Wisch asked whether non-State agencies were being interviewed for Task 1.

Allen responded that the intention was to interview the functional plan agencies to inform the front part of the update. He added that literature reviews and reviews of existing State and county plans would be conducted, and additional stakeholders could be interviewed if needed.

Wisch added that as [Holomua Collective] was going through the legislative process to initiate Phase II, one of the big pushes was to move beyond government employees talking about what should be in [the State Plan]. Wisch suggested to start conversations with community organizations and the private sector at the beginning of the update process.

In response, Evans stated that she did not see any problems with moving the "identify and interview additional stakeholders per Thematic Area" activity from Task 2 to Task 1 as a part of the December 2025 to April 2026 timeline.

Primiano explained that the intention of the interview sequencing was to not talk to all of the stakeholders at once. She added that the proposed process responded to the Task Force's comments on engagement fatigue, and that upfront desk research could be used. Primiano stated that interviews with non-State agencies could be moved to Task 1 as an activity in parallel, or other stakeholders could be called out as opportunities presented themselves. Primiano also noted that she wanted to be realistic about the ordering of discussions, which may be reversed due to the interviews taking place during the Legislative Session.

Wisch responded that identifying larger conglomerative groups (e.g., non-profit, business, Chamber of Hawai'i Business Roundtable, etc.) and having discussions with five to six heads of these groups could inform questions to ask [State] agency heads.

Evans stated that there would be flexibility to move the activities Wisch described to Task 1.

Blystone added that she was of two minds and wondered if the Task Force needed a longer meeting to do a deeper dive or if the [Task Force] should trust [OPSD] to figure out the update. Blystone suggested that a longer session may support the completion of groundwork to tease out exact thematic areas. She also asked if the intention was for [OPSD] to prepare a list of thematic areas for the Task Force to react to.

Evans responded that the Task Force could certainly have a longer meeting in March or April. She added that March might work better if there is a recess period in the Legislative Session. Evans proceeded to ask for a motion to adopt the two-year plan with the changes that were noted in the discussion.

Before proceeding with the motion, Ley asked about the timing of the PIGs and how the membership of the PIGs would be determined.

Primiano stated that the membership of the PIGs was an emergent topic and that the thematic areas would be determined through the Task Force's deliberations. She added that she would want to reserve judgement on the PIGs until March or April 2026, and that the thematic areas would need to be balanced with available resources. Primiano also stated that [OPSD] would defer to the Task Force for the membership of the PIGs, adding that the PIGs would benefit from subject matter expertise.

Evans clarified that PIGs could include non-Task Force members and made a note of Ley's comment. Evans proceeded to call for comments and objections to the two-year plan as proposed and amended with the comments made during the meeting.

Blystone motioned the action item, and Ken Kakesako seconded the action item. Evans called for objections, then stated that the plan had been adopted.

4. Approval of Draft Annual Report to the 2026 Legislature

OPSD Special Plans Branch Project Coordinator Claire McCreery provided an overview of the Hawai'i State Planning Act 2025 Annual Report to the Legislature for the 2026 Legislative Session. The report is organized into three sections. The Introduction section describes the history of the State Planning Act, Phase I report, and the Task Force's charge for Phase II. The Activities and Accomplishments section details work completed in 2025, including staffing for the update, legislative and policy research and analysis, the project workplan, stakeholder interviews, and Task Force meetings and informational presentations. The final section, Planned Activities for 2026, summarizes future research, engagement support, Task Force meetings and membership, and administrative support from OPSD in the coming year.

Following McCreery's presentation, Blystone stated that she wanted to say mahalo to the OPSD staff for putting the documents together, adding that she had no specific comments on the legislative report.

Kakesako asked whether Appendix C, "Findings from Initial Interviews with the County Planning Departments," could be reviewed [by the Task Force] before the finalization of the report.

Evans stated that the findings report was not included in the draft annual report because it was in the process of being converted for accessibility. Evans added that OPSD had received a request from a member of the public to ensure document accessibility and that the appendix would be shared prior to the submission of the report to the Legislature. Evans noted that comments on the appendix would be welcomed.

Wisch asked about a statement on page 3 of the draft annual report, which stated that the University of Hawai'i Department of Urban and Regional Planning had developed an interview guide and an outreach list. Wisch asked whether these materials would be publicly available.

Evans replied that she was not sure whether the materials would be ready in time, but was happy to share them for public feedback, likely in March.

Wisch suggested either adding a note on when the materials would be ready or not mentioning the materials in the report.

Evans acknowledged this comment and asked when the materials would be ready.

Wisch added that there was no rush on the materials but wanted to note that someone might ask about them if the statement was included.

Evans agreed, noting that the materials would not be included if they were not ready. Evans then called for other questions, thoughts, comments, and a motion.

Blystone moved to approve the report, and Dawn Chang seconded the motion. Evans confirmed that the legislative report was adopted with the changes discussed.

5. Announcements

As the announcement that the legislative report would be submitted by the December 31, 2025, deadline was already stated, no additional announcements were made. Evans called for announcements from the Task Force members and designees.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 PM.