

Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority: From Fragmented to Financed – Advancing Clean Energy for Urban Honolulu

Building a Clean Energy Investment Pipeline in the City and County of Honolulu

AT A GLANCE

Investment Priorities

Building Decarbonization and Resiliency Upgrades, Distributed solar and Battery storage, Resilience hubs at community-serving facilities, and EV Charging Infrastructure.

Pipeline Value

\$650 million across 9 different investment portfolios

Key Partners

City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (Resilience Office), Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority (HGIA), Hawaiian Electric; Hawai'i Energy; University of Hawai'i (Good Jobs Hawai'i); Hawai'i State Energy Office; Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i; First Hawaiian Leasing; community-based organizations and nonprofit outreach partners; private sector implementation partners

Community Impacts

At least 50% of pipeline targeted to critically impacted census tracts; lower energy costs and burden and increased access to high quality jobs; resilience services and hubs in critically impacted communities

Strategic Role

Market Organizer | Financing Anchor | Portfolio Aggregator
The Resilience Office leads project origination, aggregation, and stakeholder coordination. HGIA serves as the financing anchor, deploying capital through established mechanisms across the full pipeline.

The Path Forward

Activating the one-stop shop platform, advancing portfolio-level projects toward financing readiness, and embedding the Public Private Partnership plan (P3 framework) into HGIA's existing financing infrastructure to deploy capital at scale.

THE BIG PICTURE

The Challenge: As an island community, Hawaii has the highest electricity prices in the United States and remains heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels. Residents and building owners interested in clean energy upgrades must navigate separate application processes across City and County of Honolulu (City) programs, State initiatives, utility incentives, and financing providers. Stakeholder workshops conducted during the Municipal Investment Fund (MIF) grant period identified this fragmented program landscape—along with governance challenges in multifamily buildings, limited contractor capacity, and inconsistent project documentation—as the primary obstacles preventing viable projects from reaching financing.

The Solution: HGIA and the City and County of Honolulu used the MIF grant to design a public-private partnership framework that aggregates building-scale clean energy projects into standardized investment opportunities. Rather than advancing projects one at a time, the model bundles residential retrofits, multifamily electrification, commercial upgrades, resilience hub installations, and EV charging deployments into portfolios that reduce transaction costs and meet institutional lending requirements—anchored by a proposed clean energy one-stop shop that connects participants to contractors, financing, and technical assistance through a single entry point.



CREATING THE FOUNDATION

Through the Municipal Investment Fund, HGIA and the Resilience Office built the market infrastructure needed to convert fragmented, building-level demand into a coordinated, portfolio-scale investment pipeline.

Clean Energy One-Stop Shop: The centerpiece of the P3 framework is a proposed clean energy one-stop-shop—a coordinated intake and support platform for residents, businesses, and community organizations. It would consolidate what currently requires separate engagement with HGIA financing programs, Hawaii Energy rebates, utility interconnection processes, and City permitting into a single participation pathway. Multilingual assistance, mobile outreach and in-person enrollment support are built into the design—a direct response to stakeholder findings that digital-only access excludes many households in critically impacted communities.

Portfolio Aggregation Model: The framework organizes projects into standardized portfolios rather than treating each building upgrade as an individual transaction. Portfolio types span public and private multifamily housing, small and large commercial buildings, single-family residences, publicly owned resilience hubs, non-government community institutions, and EV charging infrastructure. Standardized intake documentation, retrofit scope templates, and consistent data collection allow capital providers to evaluate projects efficiently across similar types, reducing the transaction costs that have historically made distributed building upgrades unattractive to institutional investors.

Financing Infrastructure: HGIA brings proven financing tools to the framework: the Green Energy Money Saver (GEM\$) program provides affordable on-bill financing for underserved ratepayers, aligning repayment with energy savings. C-PACER property-based repayment mechanism enables private capital investment in commercial energy efficiency, renewables, and resilience improvements. These can be layered with federal Investment Tax Credits, utility rebates, and state or local funding. Existing HGIA bank partnerships across Hawaii support co-financing of commercial distributed energy projects and third-party-owned residential solar-plus-storage systems. The City has separately financed Energy Savings Performance Contracts (ESPC) through First Hawaiian Leasing and is currently in negotiations with TD Equipment Finance for its next ESPC phase.

Stakeholder Engagement: HGIA and the Resilience Office convened a multi-sector workshop series in early 2026 that brought together public agencies, community organizations, educators, contractors, and financing partners. Representation from Native Hawaiian nonprofits and contractors serving communities shaped the framework's emphasis on trusted intermediaries, culturally appropriate outreach, workforce development support, and in-person enrollment assistance—ensuring the platform is built for the communities it is designed to serve.

FEEDING THE PIPELINE

Project proponents have identified nine portfolio-level investment pipelines nearing \$650 million in investments.

Two portfolios focusing on Building Decarbonization & Resiliency for Multifamily Housing: Publicly Owned (\$50 million) **and Privately Owned** (\$150 million): Energy & water efficiency, electrification, solar & storage, and resiliency upgrades across affordable and market rate multifamily housing.

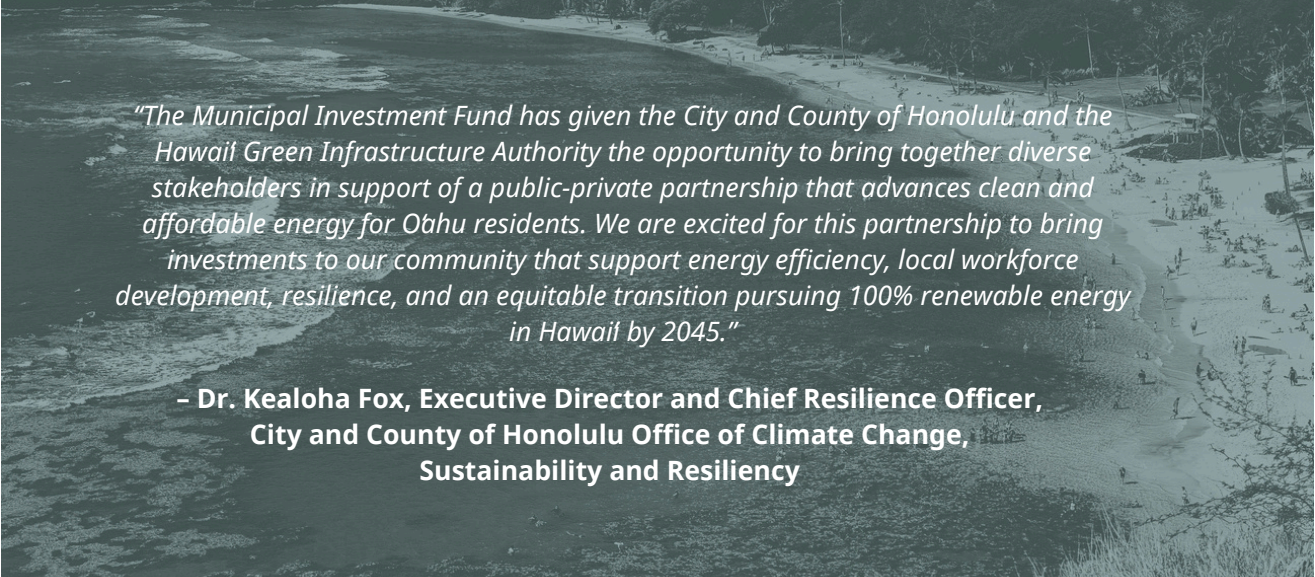
Residential Single-Family Homes: \$65 million. Efficiency, electrification, solar & storage, resiliency upgrades across 1,000 homes.

Two portfolios focusing on Building Decarbonization & Resiliency for Large Commercial Buildings: Privately owned (\$200 million) **and Publicly Owned** (\$100 million): Energy & water efficiency, electrification, and distributed generation for privately owned large commercial properties prioritizing critically impacted communities.

Building Decarbonization & Resiliency for Small Commercial Buildings: \$50 million. Efficiency, electrification, solar & storage, and resiliency upgrades for small commercial businesses and retail facilities.

Two portfolios focusing on Resilience Hubs across 20 **Public Facilities** (\$10 million) and 30 **Community Institutions and Nonprofits** (\$15 million): Solar and storage serving community-facing facilities and prioritizing critically impacted communities.

Clean Transportation Electrification: \$7.45 million. EV charging infrastructure at multifamily properties, public serving institutions, small commercial facilities and municipal sites prioritizing critically impacted communities.



"The Municipal Investment Fund has given the City and County of Honolulu and the Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority the opportunity to bring together diverse stakeholders in support of a public-private partnership that advances clean and affordable energy for Oahu residents. We are excited for this partnership to bring investments to our community that support energy efficiency, local workforce development, resilience, and an equitable transition pursuing 100% renewable energy in Hawaii by 2045."

**– Dr. Kealoa Fox, Executive Director and Chief Resilience Officer,
City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change,
Sustainability and Resiliency**

IMPACT & NEXT STEPS

The MIF grant enabled the Resilience Office to come up with a documented, coordinated model for converting fragmented building-level demand into standardized, portfolio-scale investment opportunities aligned with HGIA's established financing programs. The result was a public-private partnership framework, portfolio structure, and stakeholder coalition that did not previously exist in a coordinated form. The nearly \$650 million pipeline represents the scale of opportunity that framework is designed to organize and advance toward financing readiness.

Permitting Acceleration: The City's Department of Planning and Permitting already offers expedited review for qualifying solar, battery, and EV installations under Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, with residential solar timelines of 4–6 weeks. The P3 framework builds on this foundation by coordinating review pathways across departments for common clean energy project types and publishing guidance to improve predictability for developers and contractors.

Workforce Alignment: The coalition connected project deployment planning with the statewide Clean Energy Sector Partnership, led by the Hawaii State Energy Office and supported by the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii and the University of Hawaii. The P3 framework includes development of a centralized workforce portal connecting training providers, certification pathways, job seekers and contractors/employers—responding to a gap that workshop participants identified between completing training and finding employment in the sector.

Scaling Through Existing Programs: The framework is designed to layer onto HGIA's existing financing infrastructure—GEM\$, C-PACER, and private lending partnerships—rather than creating parallel systems. The one-stop shop, standardized documentation, and portfolio aggregation model each increase the volume and consistency of projects flowing into programs that already have capital deployment capacity. For investors, developers, and financing partners, Hawaii offers a rare combination: a proven financing anchor, a coordinated origination platform, and a nearly \$650 million pipeline organized and ready to move.

This case study was funded through the Municipal Investment Fund (MIF) to support local governments and their partner not-for-profit organizations in developing public-private partnership plans that accelerate the deployment of capital to energy and infrastructure projects.

