

**PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
URBAN HEAT ISLAND/TREE AND SHADE SUBCOMMITTEE (UHITS) MINUTES**

**March 15, 2022  
Phoenix City Hall  
Online Utilizing WebEx**

<b>Subcommittee Members Present</b>	<b>City Staff Present</b>
Vjollca Berisha, via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Anna Bettis via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Hazel Chandler via phone	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Aimee Esposito via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Tiffany Halperin via phone	David Hondula, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation (OHRM)
Tabitha Myers, Vice Chair via phone	
Ginger Sykes Torres, Chair via phone	
<b>Commission Members Not Present</b>	<b>Community Members Present</b>
Marc Campbell	Mark C
Bronwyn Doebbeling	Julie (no last name)
Nika Forte	
Nicole Rodriguez	
Columba Sainz	

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements**

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

Chair Torres announced that subcommittee was extended until the end of 2022 during the March 2022 EQSC meeting the previous week. EQSC had previously requested a detailed timeline for the work the subcommittee would like to complete in this additional time.

**2. Review and approval of February 8, 2022 Minutes**

**ACTION:**

Vice Chair Myers mad a motion to approve the February 8, 2022 minutes. Subcommittee member Chandler seconded the motion. The motion carried 8:0.

**3. Public Comments**

No one spoke.

**4. Update from the Heat Office**

Chief Heat Officer Dr. David Hondula provided an update on the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation current work including heat response planning and upcoming Heat Response Plan, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) possible funding for heat work, and Cool Corridor site selection. It was also announced that the Urban Tree Program Manager position selected candidate has been selected and will be announced very soon.

Subcommittee member Bettis asked how the city will be addressing the water need and maintenance for Cool Corridors and if any monitoring will be completed before and after the project. Hondula stated that all projects this year will be on city-owned land so irrigation systems are already in place and will follow the existing tree maintenance program with Parks or Streets. A proposal has been submitted for monitoring sites, but there hasn't been a decision made yet. The Heat Office plans to look into other monitoring options and data that may be interesting to collect.

Subcommittee member Esposito asked if there was feasibility to remove concrete to create more space for tree planting. Hondula stated that green infrastructure has been a part of the discussion and there could be an opportunity to revise streetscape in the future. Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen added that there are also concerns about air quality and if stabilized pavement is removed there needs to be consideration about the new landscape to replace it.

Chair Torres asked about how the subcommittee can help advocate for ARPA funding and the upcoming budget cycle. Hondula suggested support for heat action funding and the Heat Action Plan at council meetings and specific projects could include additional shade shelters and proposed ARPA funded projects. The trial budget will be presented at the next City Council Policy session and there will be budget hearings for each council district through April.

**5. Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development Memo Discussion**

Chair Torres asked the workgroup to overview the memo and for subcommittee members to provide additional recommendations for the memo. Subcommittee members Halperin, Rodriguez, and Esposito prepared the memo and overviewed their work on summarizing

the discussion and recommendations from the February meeting. The memo detailed next steps for the subcommittee concerning green infrastructure and tasks for EQSC assuming UHITS was planning to sunset. With the extension UHITS may be able to take these on themselves. They also ask subcommittee members to provide their input on the memo.

Chair Torres suggested some of the memo items could be moved to the timeline and work plan memo for UHITS to take on rather than including them as recommendations for the city to consider. The extension allows time for additional work. Subcommittee member Halperin agreed.

Memo topics included prioritizing maintenance for new and existing trees, prioritizing and supporting adoption of the Tree and Shade Master Plan goals, an annual progress update for trees and urban forestry, creating a guide for tactical urbanism best practices, adopting low impact development, sustainable building designs, and multi-modal transportation corridors, reducing arterial roadway widths, and adding protected bike lanes surrounding city parks and greenspaces.

Chair Torres thanked the workgroup for their work and appreciated the additional verbal explanation and asked that these details be added to the memo to help make the connection between the recommendations and green infrastructure.

Subcommittee member Bettis stated that The Nature Conservancy is in the process of a report on low impact development benefits that will be available in the next month. The report findings could likely be included in the memo.

Chief Heat Officer Hondula suggested adding a definition of green infrastructure to the memo as definitions differ depending on audience so clarity would be helpful as the document is shared. It was also suggested to consider funding and how to balance funds between action and acquiring data and monitoring. Environmental Programs Administrator Allen suggested using the EPA definition of green infrastructure as it will align with existing projects.

Chair Torres asked the working group to work on the memo before the next meeting and to incorporate the discussion from today's meeting. Subcommittee Halperin agreed and asked for subcommittee members to email their suggestions if they had additional comments.

## **6. EQSC Request for UHITS Future Work and Timeline**

Chair Torres suggested using the December 2021 memo detailing future work for the subcommittee as a starting point for the timeline creation. These topics included green infrastructure recommendations, cool pavement policy recommendations, building code recommendations for artificial shade, community input on heat work, track existing tree and shade goals, additional cool roof policy recommendations, and new development policy recommendations. Chair Torres asked for additional items to consider and preferences for topics to take on.

Subcommittee member Chandler suggested evaluation criteria for the Heat Office staff as previously requested by Chief Heat Officer Hondula. Hondula clarified the ask was for performance metrics for staff annual review and tasks staff should be responsible for. Environmental Programs Administrator Allen expressed concern for the subcommittee taking on this item and that city staff will consult Human Resources about this.

Subcommittee Chandler suggested prioritizing cool pavement and tree protection recommendations. Chair Torres suggested taking on recommendations for artificial shade. Subcommittee member Esposito agreed with both of them and would like to investigate additional tree protection language and alternative building materials for shade structures.

Chair Torres will draft a timeline based on these recommendations starting with the completing the green infrastructure memo by May, then focusing on cool pavement recommendations for June and July, then artificial construction shade through October or November, and a summary memo during December.

**7. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist