

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

**July 6, 2021
Phoenix City Hall
Online Utilizing WebEx**

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Vjollca Berisha via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Anna Bettis via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Marc Campbell via phone	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Hazel Chandler via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Aimee Esposito via phone	Cindy Salazar, OEP
David Hondula via phone	Cuong Dinh, Parks
Tabitha Myers, Vice Chair via phone	Chris Ewell, Streets Transportation
Nicole Rodriguez via phone	Michael Hammett, Communications
Ginger Sykes Torres, Chair via phone	Aaron Kane, Council District 7 Office
	Erik Wilson, Street Transportation
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Bronwyn Doebbeling	Mario Barajas (Spanish Interpretation)
Nika Forte	Mary Baron
Tiffany Halperin	Joshua Gilman
Columba Sainz	Vania Guevara
	Melissa McCann

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

Chair Torres announced that Carlos Galindo-Elvira has resigned from the subcommittee and thanked him for his participation in the subcommittee.

2. Review and approval of May 11, 2021 Minutes

ACTION:

Subcommittee member Hondula made a motion to approve the May 11, 2021 minutes. Subcommittee member Chandler seconded the motion. The motion carried 9:0.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Status of UHITS Recommendations for Cool Corridors

Chair Torres provided an update on the Cool Corridors recommendation document they voted to approve last month. The document was sent to the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) and has been approved by them. EQSC Chair Colin Tetreault has sent the comments to the City Manager's Office, Mayor's Office, and City Council Members. He requested a response to EQCS within 45 days, which will also be shared with UHITS members.

Subcommittee member Hondula asked Erik Wilson, Streets Transportation Horticulturist, about the status of the new budget items and any updates or next steps. Wilson confirmed that the new funds are in the Streets budget and they are in the process of how to plan and prioritize using the funds.

Chair Torres asked if there are any current measures in determining which cool corridors will be created first. Wilson said that is in progress and no decisions have been made yet. There is expected to be new datasets and updates to the prioritization map presented at an earlier meeting that will be used in making the determination. Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked if the American Forest tree equity dataset is being used. Wilson has the dataset but hasn't fully looked into the dataset in order to overlay it alongside the other datasets. It could be used in the future. Subcommittee member Rodriguez expressed concern about datasets including palm trees as a tree and source of shade. Subcommittee member Hondula stated that there are different datasets being researched that can be used that better identify shade producing trees and wouldn't include palm trees as shade producing.

5. Draft Climate Action Plan Discussion and Recommendations

Dr. Matthew Potzler, Office of Environmental Programs Air Quality and Climate Specialist presented a PowerPoint detailing the draft Climate Action Plan sectors and goals and preliminary comments received on the draft so far. The comment period for the draft is until July 30, 2021. Chair Torres asked subcommittee members to provide comments, however in the interest of time during the meeting to focus questions and comments now on topics directly concerning the subcommittee. She encourages members to comment on the entire plan on their own time before the comment deadline.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked if the draft was going to be translated into Spanish. Dr. Potzler said that the translated version will be posted online by next week as the text translation has been completed and now needs to be updated to match the graphic design.

Subcommittee members Rodriguez, Hondula, Berisha, and Chandler agreed that the current goal of 30 cool corridors was too few and needed to be increased. The 2021-2022 budget included the development of 9 one-mile cool corridors each year so the goal should at least include those investments. This would be at least 81 over the next 9 years until 2030. Subcommittee members Rodriguez and Hondula suggested a goal of at least 100 cool corridors, however should strive for as many as possible instead of simply meeting a specific goal limit.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez suggested changing the 5-minute walk to a park or pathway to a specific distance to be more inclusive and transparent of the exact distance included in the goal and suggested one-half mile. Subcommittee member Hondula noted that a one-half mile distance is less aggressive goal based on an average walking speed using by transportation professionals. The distance-based goal for 5 minutes would be closer to one-fourth mile.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez and Chair Torres asked for clarification on the 25% shade canopy goal on whether it is a 2050 or 2030 goal. Dr. Potzler clarified that it is a 2030 goal from the Tree and Shade Master Plan and the 2050 goal is to maintain and keep the tree canopy at that level. Chair Torres asked what the current tree and shade canopy cover is. Dr. Potzler stated that based on the 2010 Tree and Shade Master Plan it is around 11 to 14% and should be similar, or less, now due to tree loss and one next step is updating the tree inventory. Subcommittee members Esposito, Rodriguez, Myers, Hondula, Berisha, and Chandler and Chair Torres suggested increased the goal from 25% by 2050 as progress should be made between 2030 and 2050 and the shade goal should include an equity element by specifying the 25% goal on a sub-city level, for example census blocks or city districts.

Subcommittee members Hondula suggested a health-based goal included in the plan. Subcommittee members Berisha, Rodriguez, Myers, and Chandler agreed. They suggested including a goal of zero heat deaths and to include actions and services specifically targeted at most vulnerable heat death and illness populations.

The subcommittee discussed the following recommendations for the draft Climate Action Plan Heat goals:

Goal 1: Increase to 100 cool corridors, minimum, by 2030 and build partnerships with community and private organizations to assist in development of cool corridors

Goal 2: Add language for 25% tree and shade cover in every district by 2030

Goal 3: Identify health-based goal and specific resources for homeless, outdoor workers, and indoor death cases

Goal 4: Add language about reducing asphalt and decreasing low albedo surfaces

2050 Goal 1: Modify goal to include a distance-based walk to park instead of 5-minute walk

2050 Goal 2: Increase goal to higher than 25% tree and shade cover from 2030 to 2050

ACTION:

Subcommittee member Chandler made a motion to approve the draft Climate Action Plan recommendations and to send these recommendations to EQSC. Subcommittee member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion carried 9:0.

6. Cool Roofs Discussion and Policy Recommendations

This agenda item was not discussed. It will be discussed at a future meeting.

7. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 10, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Future agenda items will include continue discussions on Cool Roofs policy recommendations, how green infrastructure is being implemented in the Complete Streets Program suggested by subcommittee member Rodriguez, explore artificial shade structures suggested by subcommittee member Myers. Subcommittee members may email Chair Torres if they wish to suggest any other agenda topics.

8. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist