

OSCER

# Meet the Team



# OSCER

## Office of Sustainability, Climate, Equity, and Resilience

Created in July 2023, Interim Administrator Bethany Morrison appointed in February 2024.

The recently established office aims to:

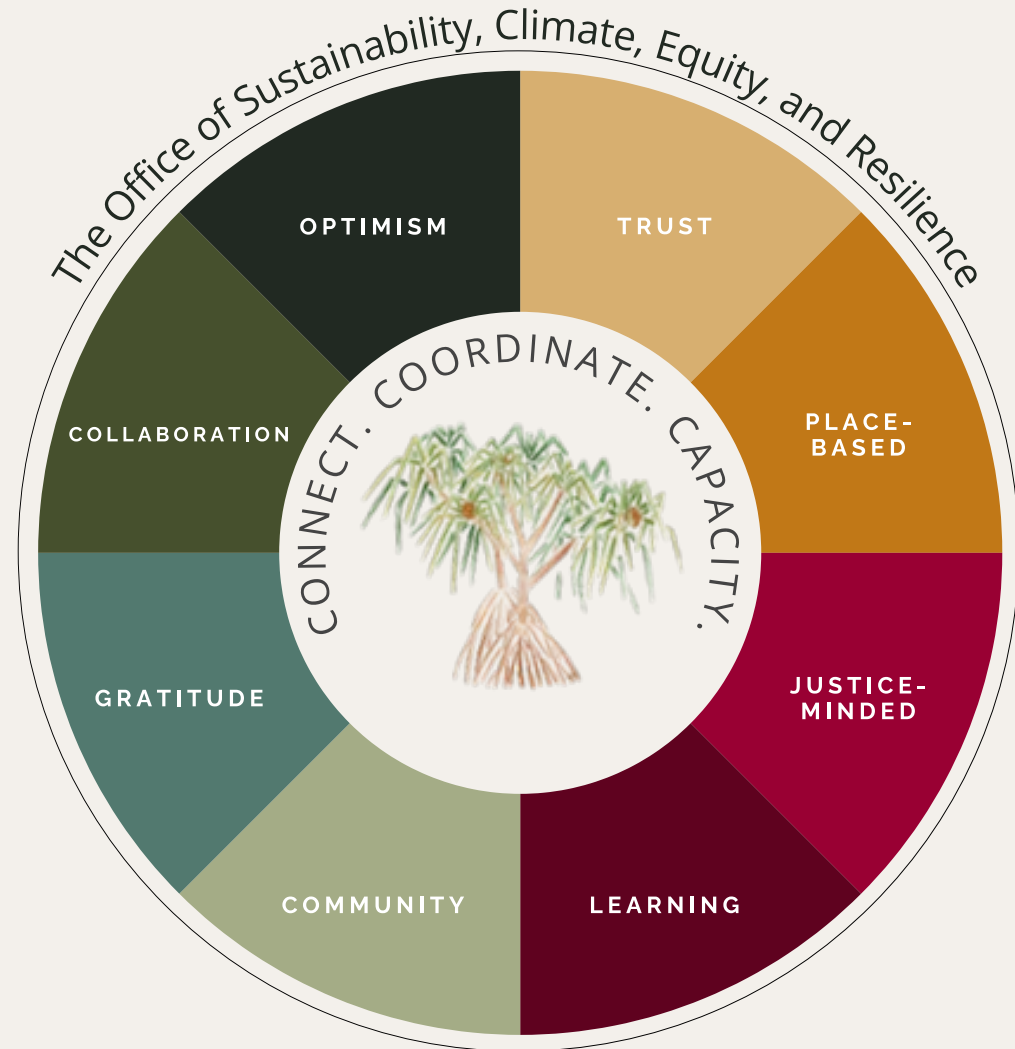
- Streamline collaboration among various county agencies in crafting policies and initiatives aimed at decreasing greenhouse gas emissions
- Advance renewable energy sources and boost energy efficiency
- Safeguard the island's biodiversity
- Reinforce the County's infrastructure against climate change effects
- Ensure the equitable implementation of sustainability efforts across all community sectors.



# OSCER Mission & Values

Mission: The Office of Sustainability, Climate, Equity, and Resilience (OSCER) strives to lead the county by connecting, coordinating, and building capacity in our collective effort to sustain the health of our 'āina and island community.

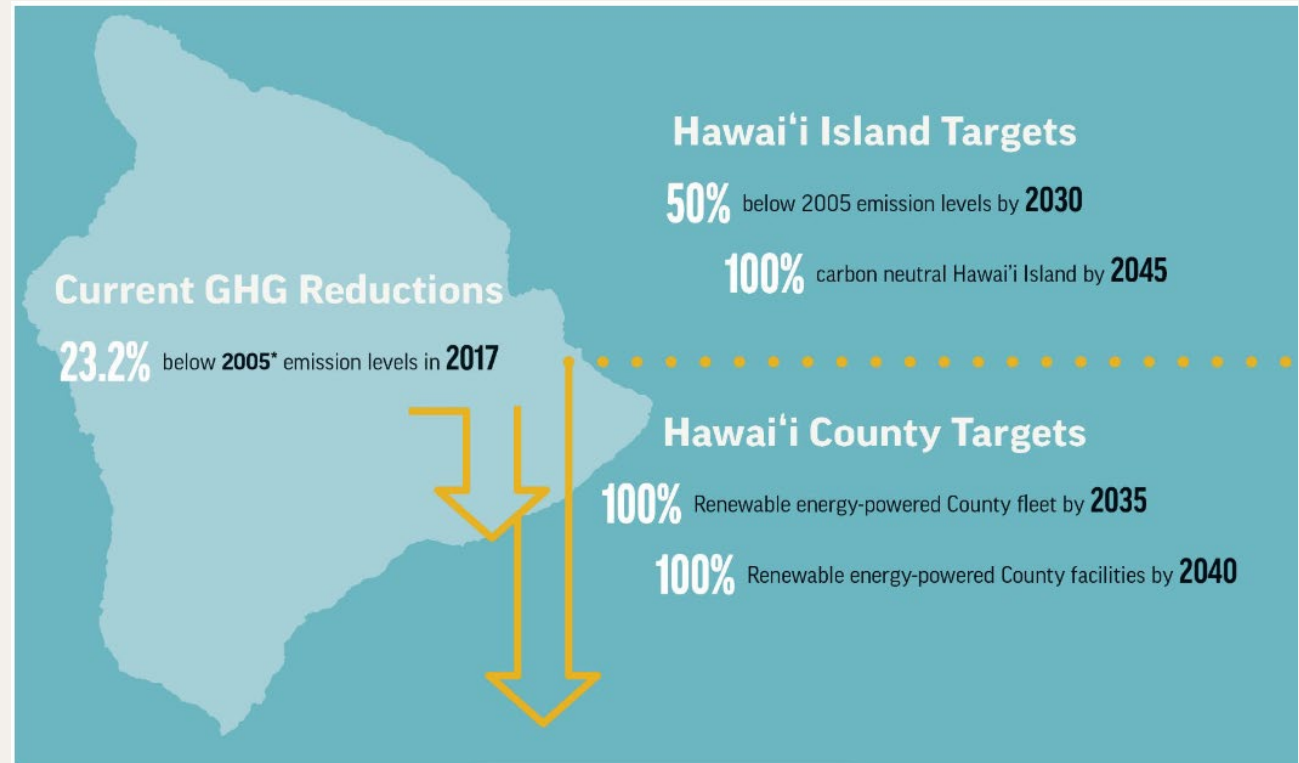
Our values serve as the foundation for decision-making, setting priorities, and shaping the overall direction of OSCER and the office culture.



# Integrated Climate Action Plan

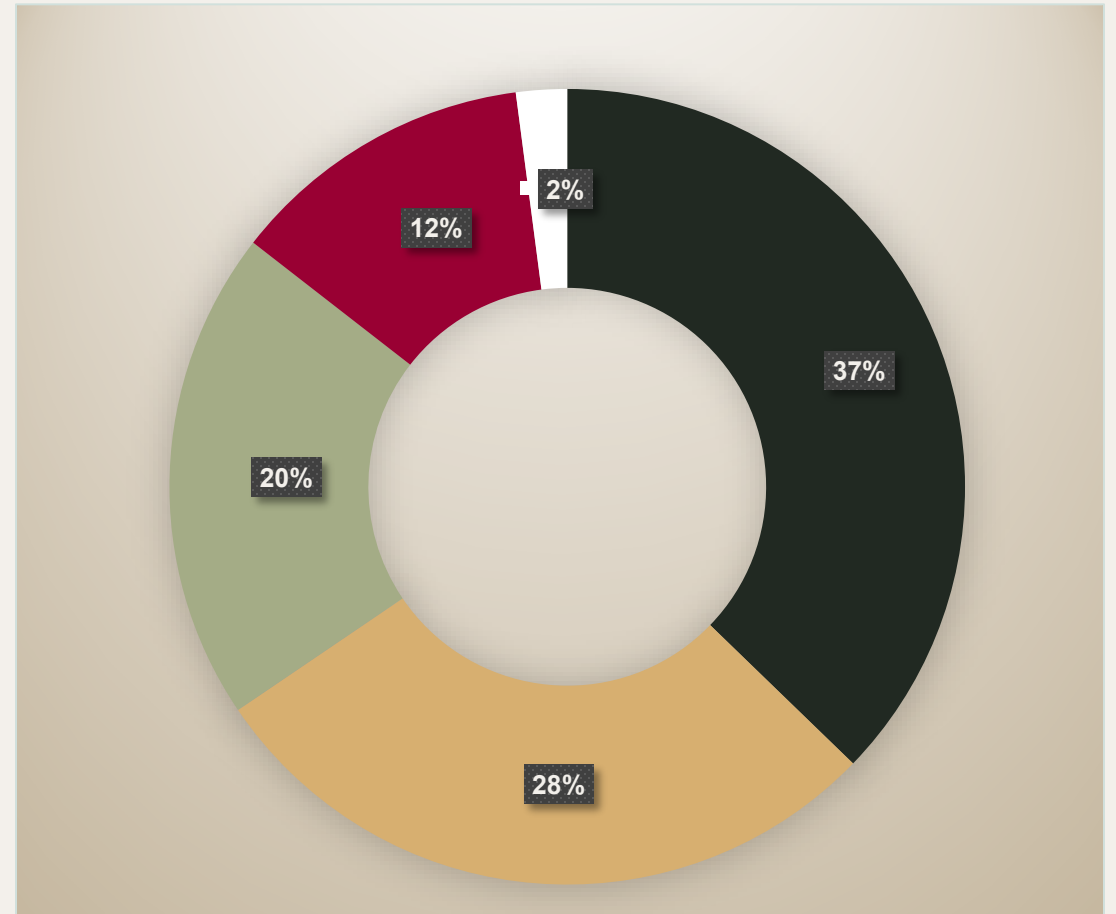
## Our strategic roadmap

- Adopted in 2023
- Identifies County actions for climate mitigation and adaptation
- Identifies implementation priority areas



# Progress snapshot

- 290 actions and sub actions
  - 37% Priority (not started)
  - 28% Low Priority (not started)
  - 20% Started (not completed)
  - 12% Ongoing
  - 2% Completed



# Priority Areas

Hazard  
Management

Efficient Use  
of Resources

Land  
Management

Resilient  
Infrastructure

Policy  
Planning

Water  
Conservation

Zero Waste

Community  
Engagement

Energy Use

Fleet  
Conversion

Human  
Health

Cesspool  
Conversion

Grant  
Funding

# Connect

Connecting with people in the community and internal to the County to share knowledge and resources about SCER on-island and implement action in a way that reflects the values of the people here.

# OSCER is connecting by:

- Attending community events to help share information about OSCER
- Connecting with boots on the ground organizations
- Establishing website presence and social media platforms
- Participating in campaigns to increase public awareness of SCER issues
  - Example: Participated with DOH and other counties in the launch of a Heat Safety Awareness Campaign
- Publishing a newsletter monthly to increase transparency and spotlight community and County action
- Future efforts:
  - Creating a webinar series to highlight County action and opportunities to be more sustainable in everyday life
  - Publish a Climate Data Dashboard and Portal for transparent monitoring of our progress

# Coordinate

Coordinating efforts in the County to implement SCER priorities (see immediate priorities below), especially when efforts involve collaboration between different departments and external entities.

# OSCER is coordinating by:

- Working across departments to create a Facilities Conditions Assessment and Energy Management Plan
- Coordinating with departments to apply for grants
- Coordinating with community organizations to support grant applications
- Coordinating with community organizations to support data collection
  - Example: NASA DEVELOP partnership for Hilo Bay watershed data
- Coordinating with statewide groups to support policy initiatives
- Coordinating Integrated Climate Action Plan implementation
- Coordinating to provide a Zero Waste Pilot Program
- Future efforts:
  - Facilitating conversations in the cesspool conversion space to support cesspool conversion efforts on-island
  - Developing a framework for regular convening of the sustainability summit working groups towards collective efforts

# Build Capacity

Building capacity within the County to be more SCER-conscious in the County's work so that County operations can protect our land and people.

# OSCER is building capacity by:

- Applied for grants to improve energy efficiency and convert heavy duty vehicles to zero emissions
- Implementing the Integrated Climate Action Plan directly and supporting departments in implementation
- Gathering data for baseline sustainability assessments (GHG inventory)
- Applied to the SolSmart Designation Program to become the first designated county in Hawaii to accelerate the growth of clean, affordable solar energy.
- Future efforts: Develop a County-wide capacity building and training series for County staff on Mental Health First Aid and Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Oriented Equity-focused Systems (TIROES).



**OSCER**

Youth Engagement

# How can you get involved

## Started or Ongoing Actions:

- Partner with public and private entities to increase awareness of heat risks and care for people exposed to extreme heat
- Continue to publish a municipal greenhouse gas inventory for County buildings, transportation, waste, wastewater, and land use.
- Publish a county-wide greenhouse gas inventory every 3 years.
- Continue to conduct and improve public outreach on water conservation, including drought-resistant landscapes, water conservation practices, and reducing waters leaks. Reducing water use will reduce DWS energy use.
- Implement the multi-modal complete streets program for island-wide with a focus on urban areas.
- Partner with State agencies, local universities, and non-profits to provide technical assistance and educational materials on best farming practices that improve carbon sequestration potential and increase soil quality

# How can you get involved

## Started or Ongoing Actions:

- Continue partnerships with State and federal agencies to expand programs like Da Bux to increase accessibility of local food
- Assist with enforcement of restriction of non-reef safe sunscreen
- Continue to partner with the Kohala Center to provide educational resources to visitors and residents at Kahalu'u Bay
- Continue to develop partnerships between communities and landowners to support fire risk reduction practices, improve access for firefighters, and identify where water infrastructure can support livelihoods (grazing, agriculture)
- Participate in the Hawai'i Firewise Community Program to prepare Community Fire Plans

# How can you get involved

## Priority Actions (not started):

- Conduct public education on possible evacuation routes and safe zones
- Encourage private property owners to purchase flood Insurance and maintain drainage facilities
- Promote findings of State Cesspool Conversion Working Group and integrate findings into wastewater management, planning, and outreach
- Integrate climate change into public outreach for water conservation including drought-resistant landscapes, water conservation practices, and reducing waters system losses
- Expand outreach for community rebate incentives by pursuing more public-private partnerships with Hawai'i Energy
- Conduct public outreach around charging stations to align new construction of County infrastructure with business and community