

KEA'AU-PĀHOA ADVISORY GROUP (KPAG)
Meeting No. 5 Summary

Monday, January 26, 2009 – 5:45 p.m.
Kea'au Elementary School
Kea'au, Hawai'i

PURPOSE:

- Confirm selections for reasonable alternatives
- Identify types of evaluation criteria for reasonable alternatives
- Establish date and time for Public Informational Meeting and discuss KPAG participation
- Establish date and time for KPAG meeting no. 6

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

I. Welcome and Remarks – Jiro Sumada, Deputy Director, State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT)

Mr. Sumada welcomed everyone and thanked guests for attending. He described the similarities between the typical HDOT design process and KPAG process which include developing purpose and need, identifying solutions, comparing benefits with costs and making positive decisions. He talked of the importance of public input and the opportunity to engage the community at the next public meeting. Per Mr. Sumada's request, meeting attendees observed a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Carlos Caraballo of Pāhoa. Consequently, Mr. Sumada expressed his condolences for Caraballo's friends and family and stressed the importance of making roads safer as well as moving people and goods. He concluded by encouraging the group to stay positive and keep working together to find the right solutions for this important project.

Ms. Gentry initiated self-introductions of all meeting attendees. The following representatives of the project team were present:

State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) – Jiro Sumada; Ken Tatsuguchi, Nelson Sagum, and Dina Lau from the Planning Branch; Stanley Tamura, Robert Taira, and Sal Panem from the Hawaii District Office;

SSFM International, Inc. - Cheryl Soon, Robin Barnes, Jared Chang, Jo-Anna Herkes and Genevieve Runningwind; **Learning Unlimited** – Barbara Lively and Diane Gentry; and **Geometrician Associates** - Ron Terry.

The following KPAG members were present:

Name	Group
Hunter Bishop ¹	Mayor's Representative
Larry Brown	County of Hawaii Project Manager for PRCP & PCDP
Susan Cordell	Paradise Park resident
Oliver English	W.H. Shipman, Limited
Dina Lau	HDOT, Highways Planning
Keith Lawrence	Sitting in for Frank Lawrence
Manny Mattos	Retired Police Office
Emily Naeole	Council Member, District 5
Jon Olson	Puna Traffic Safety Committee & PCDP Chairman & Sierra Club Big Island Chapter, Moku Loa Group
Wesley Owens	VP of Orchidland Association & Cyclist
Jennifer Perry	Kapoho resident & Produce and Flower Transporter
Nelson Sagum	HDOT, Highways Planning
Elizabeth Salfen	PCDP Community Liaison & PMAR Working Committee; & Weed and Seed
Damon Tucker	Friends of Puna's Future

Absent Members included: Fred Blas, Neil Erickson, and Faye Hanohano.

Members that have resigned this meeting include: None

Friends of the Advisory Group and public participants in attendance included: Douglas Zang, Roxanne Hampton, Sativa Upright, Elizabeth Weatherford, Brooks Maloof, Gail Clark, and Kaniu Stocksdale.

II. Review of The Reasonable Set of Alternatives from KPAG No. 4

Presented by Ms. Soon. A discussion of the alternatives ensued and reference was made to three (3) handouts 1) Purpose and Need Statement, 2) Outcome of Alternatives Exercise by KPAG Breakout groups, and 3) Alternatives for Kea'au-Pāhoa Road (with 3-D renderings). A brief description of each handout was provided by Ms. Soon. Following the discussion, KPAG members were asked to vote on whether the range of alternatives described in the handout "Alternatives for Keaau-Pahoa Road, January 9, 2009" reflected the "reasonable set of alternatives". Ms. Soon explained that the "reasonable set of alternatives" will be presented at the public informational meeting and then will be used for further review in the environmental process. The majority of the members voted in affirmative.⁷

¹ New KPAG member as of this meeting

Wesley Owens asked, *What will be the treatment for the median?*

- *Response: Final treatment will be determined at a later time. It may be grass, pavement, Jersey barrier, etc.*

Damon Tucker asked, *Who is responsible for the upkeep of a grassed median? Are these costs included in the project construction and design cost estimates?*

- *Response: State Department of Transportation is responsible for the upkeep but these costs are considered maintenance and not included in construction and design costs.*

Damon Tucker asked, *Can you see the opposing traffic over a Jersey barrier?*

- *Response: Yes, since jersey barriers are about 3 to 4 feet tall.*

Jon Olson asked, *From a planning perspective, which alternative or combination of alternatives would best suit the population in 2020?*

- *Response: The alternative analysis will address the needs of today's conditions, the conditions of 2018, and the conditions of 2038. Some improvements may not be needed today, but may be needed in the future. Thru this context-sensitive planning process, we [HDOT and KPAG] will be assessing the impacts of the alternatives at each interval. At this point, KPAG has the opportunity to add any other alternatives before reaching group consensus that these are a complete set of reasonable alternatives to compare and move forward.*

Damon Tucker asked, *How can the reasonable alternatives be selected without discussing the intersections at this time?*

- *Response: At this time, the focus of KPAG is to agree upon the range of lanes that will be considered in the alternatives analysis. The current alternatives include a range from 3 lanes up to 6 lanes. Intersections improvements are also important and will be discussed in detail at the next KPAG meeting.*

Larry Brown asked, *What factor determines the necessary width of a lane?*

- Response: Per federal design guidelines, 12 foot lanes are desirable for both urban and rural facilities. Lane widths, however, can be modified due to certain circumstances such as the availability of existing right-of-way.*

Jennifer Perry reminded fellow members to remember that larger trucks and vehicles also utilize Highway 130.

Nelson Sagum asked, *What are the KPAG's thoughts on including sidewalks for pedestrians and curb and gutter treatments?*

- *Response: Manny Mattos suggested that consideration of sidewalks remain as a component of the set of alternatives. There were no objections by other KPAG members.*

III. Discussion of the types of evaluation criteria that will be identified for the reasonable set of alternatives

Presented by Ms. Soon and Ms. Gentry. For this exercise, KPAG members were each given green, yellow, blue, and red dots (six of each color) and instructions on what each dot should represent in the exercise. Green dots would be placed on the most important criteria which must be met in the final alternative for it to be successful. Yellow dots would be placed on very important criterion that should be considered; but if it is not fully met, the project should still move forward. Blue dots represent criteria are nice to have, but are not absolutely essential. Red dots represent the least important criteria which do not need to be met in the final alternative.

KPAG members were given the opportunity to add to the list of evaluation criteria. Several new evaluation criteria were added by the group. Members were then instructed to place the color dots on the poster list of potential evaluation criteria. A summary of Exercise Evaluation Criteria for Comparing Alternatives is included with this document as Attachment 1.

IV. Presentation II on Intersections (Roger Dyar)

Ms. Soon explained that Roger Dyar was not present due to a recent death in his family. Mr. Dyar's presentation will be re-scheduled for KPAG meeting no. 6. An introduction on the intersections study was shared by Ms. Soon and a brief discussion on roundabouts ensued. There are six (6) intersections within the project corridor which were identified as having the potential to warrant a roundabout. Lead by Ms. Soon, a short discussion of each intersection took place.

Damon Tucker requested names of intersections which would be considered for roundabouts.

- *Response: This information will be provided to KPAG members. Unfortunately, the discussion for this topic has been postponed to KPAG no. 6 due to Mr. Dyar's excused absence.*

Hunter Bishop asked, What is the "Kahakai Pāhoa Road Complex?"

- *Response: The area encompassing the Old Pāhoa Road intersection (to enter Malama Marketplace) and includes the Kahakai intersection with Highway 130.*

V. Preparing for a Public Informational Meeting

A discussion for the Public Information Meeting (PIM) ensued. Since Mr. Dyar's presentation on intersections is postponed, the KPAG members voted to hold KPAG meeting no. 6 prior to the PIM. Subsequently, KPAG meeting no. 6 will be held on March 30th, at 5:45 PM in Kea'au Elementary School Cafeteria.

- VI. What's next for KPAG?** - KPAG meeting no. 6.
- VII. Q & A open to Friends and Visitors** - No questions.
- VIII. HDOT Quick Fix Update**

A "Quick Fix" update was presented by Robert Taira and group discussion ensued. Mr. Taira reported on the results of the scoping team analysis who recently conducted a study to identify problems found on Highway 130 in the Kea'au to Pāhoa corridor. The final report and recommendations are expected to be completed shortly.

Tentative recommendations for the department by the scoping team would include the following:

- *A roundabout should be considered for the Kahakai Pāhoa Road Complex.*
- *Speed limit reduction from 55 mph to 45 mph should be considered for only between Shower Drive and Ainaloa Drive. However, this may create a "speed trap" and be undesirable according to HDOT policy.*
- *Crosswalks are not expected to improve pedestrian safety and thus not likely to be recommended as a quick fix.*

Several KPAG members asked, Who can the community contact at HDOT to provide comments for the scoping team?

- *Response: Mr. Sumada directed KPAG members to send their comments to his office and he would direct them to the scoping team or appropriate person.*

Keith Lawrence asked, Would having flashing lights on each side of a crosswalk improve the safety of pedestrians using the crosswalk?

- *Response: A crosswalk warning system using flashing lights was not studied as part of the quick fix, but HDOT will check into it. Furthermore, HDOT has not installed anything similar to that on State highways.*

Jon Olson asked, Isn't there a flashing crosswalk on Highway 19 near Mountain View School?

- *Response: The flashing light is not for the crosswalk, it's a warning for vehicles to reduce their speed during school hours.*

Damon Tucker asked, Why hasn't the scoping team come to any KPAG meetings?

- *The two groups have different functions and follow separate processes. The KPAG is responsible for the long-term improvement of Keaau-Pāhoa Road and the scoping team is looking at quick-fix solutions.*

Hunter Bishop asked, How much time does it normally take for quick fix improvements to be implemented?

- *Response: HDOT works to implement the improvements as soon as possible, however the time it takes for each improvement depends on the type of change. Typically, quick fixes are identified and implemented within a period under 18 months.*

Evaluation Criteria for Comparing Alternatives

Top priority Criteria	<i>These are the most important criteria. They must be met in the final alternative for it to be successful.</i>
17	Redesign intersections to improve safety (for example, roundabouts or traffic signals)
11	Reduce number of points-of-conflict (for example, right and left turning lanes)
10	Increase roadway safety for vehicles (for example, lane width)
9	Safe use of roadway for transit, school buses, and bus riders (for example, bus pullouts, bus waiting area)
8	Safe use of roadway for pedestrians (for example, sidewalks)
7	Reduce congestion and delay and improve levels-of-service (LOS) at all times of day (for example, add lanes)
Middle Priority Criteria	<i>This is a very important criterion that should be considered; but if it is not fully met, the project should still move forward.</i>
17	Does it fit in the existing R.O.W.
15	Reduce congestion during peak hours (for example, reversible lanes, use of shoulders)
11	Retain the rural character of The Puna District
9	Improve drainage
6	Impacts on the environment, including air quality, noise, flora and fauna
Lowest Priority Criteria	<i>These criteria are nice to have, but are not absolutely essential.</i>
15	Costs of improvements
14	Provides for better emergency access
11	Landscape medians and road sides
9	Improvements can be made in stages or phases
9	Improve lighting for the entire length
7	Preserve scenic views (e.g. scenic pullouts)
7	Add raised median to separate vehicles and for rest points for pedestrian crossing
6	Create connections between Hwy 130 and any new alternative route
5	Time and cost involved in land acquisition
4	Use landscape materials from the area
2	Flexibility
	Use interpretive signage to direct residents and visitors to major locations
	Bury utility lines
	Canopy Trees