

Keaau-Pahoa Road Quick-Fix Actions

The following summary describes the observed condition, recommends a quick-fix action, and provides the status of the action.

1. Speed limits.

Speed limits are inconsistent. The Keaau Bypass and the Pahoa Bypass are wide open roadways, but are posted at 45 mph. The section between the Keaau Bypass and Pahoa Bypass roads is relatively narrow and with many intersecting roadways, and it is posted at 55 mph. The State should investigate revising the speed limits between Kea'au and Pahoa.

- *The State has submitted a request to reduce a 1-mile section on the Pahoa Bypass, between Kahakai Boulevard and the Pahoa-Kapoho Road intersection, to 45 mph to create a uniform speed of 45 mph along the Pahoa Bypass. Approval of the speed reduction request and posting new signs is anticipated within the next 30 days.*
- *The remainder of the route, between Keaau to Pahoa, is still under review for the reduction of the 55 mph posted speed. Please note that education, enforcement, and engineering are also key factors in addressing traffic safety.*

2. Striping.

Faded striping and pavement markers along the route, especially at the major intersections. The State should replace the faded striping and pavement markings.

The State has completed this work as of 4/27/09.

3. Left-turn acceleration pockets.

Install left-turn acceleration pockets at major intersections, where practical, such as Orchidland Drive.

The State is currently seeking funds from the Highway Safety Improvements Program (HSIP) for this work.

4. Bus stops.

County Hele-On buses stop at various locations along the route. The State and County should coordinate on improving bus stop locations (locating them properly, signing them, and widening pavement).

- *The County has retained SSFM to prepare a transit report which includes identification of bus stop locations. This report was completed in August 2009. These proposed locations for bus-pullouts/bus stops have been incorporated into the Keaau-Pahoa Road Improvements project. These locations were selected after consultation with the Hawaii County Mass Transit Agency and are proposed along both sides of the roadway corridor near the following cross streets: Shower Drive, Kaloli Drive, Pohaku Circle (Pahoa-bound direction only), Orchidland Drive, Paradise Drive, Makuu Drive, Ainaloa Boulevard, and Makuu Farmer's Market.*
- *The State will coordinate with County to determine whether there are any interim actions that the can be immediately completed while the County is developing its bus stop standards.*

5. Traffic Signal at Kea'au Pahoa Road/Pahoa-Kapoho Road

Complaints of signal timing being too long. The State should investigate whether the overall cycle time can be reduced or otherwise optimized.

The preliminary investigation by the State indicated probably equipment malfunction, either due to the pedestrian button or the traffic loop failure which caused a constant call to the traffic controller. The retiming of the traffic signal phasing has been completed and has improved traffic operation at the intersection.

6. Signing/Striping Improvements at Kahakai Boulevard.

Re-striping is needed at Kahakai Boulevard. Additional signs, delineators and markers should be installed to emphasize the intersection location. The State will improve the lane delineation with the installation of additional traffic control devices at the intersection

An intersection improvement project is currently under design for this intersection. The work consists of re-striping, re-signing, and installing curbed islands and a median separator island, on Kahakai Boulevard, in order to better define the intersection geometry. This project will be advertised this year, with construction to commence by the end of 2010.

7. Traffic Congestion at Kea'au Bypass Road Junction

Traffic bottlenecks where the two Pahoa-bound lanes merge at the end of the Kea'au Bypass. The State will investigate reconfiguring the Kea'au High School intersection.

The State completed the work with included reconfiguring the right turn movement from the Old Keaau-Pahoa Road onto Route 130, such that drivers would need to make a 90-degree turn at the stoplight (effectively closing off the right-turn yield situation). Prior to completing this work, the County of Hawaii, Traffic Division was consulted.

As a result of this work, the traffic operation at this location has experienced mixed success. Traffic flow has improved resulting in less frustration for the motorists traveling in the Pahoa bound direction. However, the bottleneck still occurs on a daily basis.

8. Pedestrian crosswalks.

There are few marked pedestrian crosswalks in this vicinity. The State should prepare a plan for pedestrian management along the corridor.

Marked crosswalks will be installed at major intersections as part of the long-term improvements for the Keaau-Pahoa Road Improvements project. At this time, there are no plans for short-term improvements to address pedestrian crossings.

In general, pedestrian crossings across a high speed facility (greater than 40 mph) are not recommended because statistically they have not proven to add any margin of safety for the pedestrians. However, at certain specific locations, they can enhance safety by re-directing pedestrians to safer crossing locations. For example, crosswalks should be installed behind the bus stop to help prevent situations where a bus rider steps in front of the bus directly onto the roadway (with no chance for trailing traffic to have seen the pedestrian).

9. Flashing warning light at Route 130/Old Pahoa Road intersection.

Per a request from the community, a flashing warning light at Route 130/Old Pahoa Road intersection will be considered.

The State does not recommend a flashing warning light at the intersection of Keaau-Pahoa Road and Old Pahoa Road. The State is currently investigating the feasibility of allowing right-in/right-out turning movements in to and out of Old Pahoa Road and installing a modern roundabout at the Kahakai Boulevard intersection. These improvements are discussed in the Draft EA, but could become a standalone project.