

**KEA‘AU-PĀHOA ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
KEA‘AU TO PĀHOA
Project No. STP-0130(27)
Public Informational Meeting No. 3**

Monday, May 23, 2011 – 5:30 p.m.
Keaau Elementary School
Keaau, Hawai‘i

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Public Informational Meeting was to provide an overview of the Keaau-Pahoia Road Improvements Project and present the Preferred Alternative documented in the Final Environmental Assessment (EA).

PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:

Federal Highways Administration:

Clifford Chew, Project Representative

Hawaii State Department of Transportation:

Mr. Ed Sniffen, Highways Administrator; Ken Tatsuguchi and Lance Manabe, Highways Planning; Sal Panem and Robert Tiara, Hawaii District.

SSFM International:

Cheryl Soon, Project Manager; Hugh Ono; Doug Zang, Senior Planner; Heather Forester, Planner; and Barbara Lively, Unlimited Learning.

KPAG MEMBER ATTENDEES:

Tom Brown, Jennifer Perry, Oliver English, Jon Olson, Faye Hanohano, Liz Salfen, Damon Tucker, Wesley Owens, and Tom Brown.

FRIENDS OF THE KPAG:

Inge Misajon, Grace Wal, Bert Carworth, Erica Johnson, Rick Batad, Stan Gapol, Johnathan Remund, Mike Puch, Steve Gollis, rene Siracusa, Elizabeth Weatherford, Marie Bricker, Bertie Webber, Clayton Hak, Barbara Atthurs, James Weatherford, Rob Tucker, Nina Webber, Peter Sur, Ken McGilury, Marti Morishige, Brooks Maloof, Bruckner, Patricia Walters, James Brown, Joyce Folena, Bob Yanaba, Bobby Lee, Kevin Dalton, Gail Clarke, Adam Warren, Kimo Lee, Gil Kahkle, Rod Tompson, and Sherri Carden.

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

I. Open House Period

Approximately 44 people were present and intently reviewed the exhibits, which included copies of the Final EA.

II. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Ed Sniffen, Highways Administrator, opened the formal part of the program. It was announced that the Final EA was published in the OEQC's *The Environmental Notice* on May 23, 2011, the day of the Public Informational Meeting. The document is available on the OEQC website, the Keaau-Pahoa website, public libraries, and at the Public Informational Meeting. The Final EA contains a Finding of no Significant Impact (FONSI) under Chapter 343 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. A 30-day review period is underway and concludes on June 21, 2011. At that time, it is anticipated that a Federal FONSI will be issued.

Mr. Sniffen thanked the KPAG for their dedication to the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process and the project. Since the first KPAG Meeting in August 2008, they have participated in ten evening meetings to let HDOT know what is important to the Puna community.

III. Presentation #1: The Project

Ms. Cheryl Soon gave an overview of the project. The project limits are from Keaau Bypass Road to Pahoa-Kapoho Road. This 9.5 mile corridor has 11 major intersections and over 200 driveways. During the CSS process, a Purpose and Need Statement was developed. There were seven main categories that emerged:

1. Improve roadway safety
2. Configure the road for safe use by transit vehicles and school buses, bicycles, pedestrians, and agricultural vehicles
3. Improve corridor mobility and capacity to meet future demand
4. Respect the natural beauty of Puna

5. Compliment creation of an alternate road that can be used both as an additional travel route and for emergency use
6. Be context sensitive in use of materials and sustainability
7. Respond to intra-regional connectivity needs and future land use strategies such as Village Centers

IV. Presentation #2: Final EA and Preferred Alternative

Mr. Doug Zang presented an outline of the Final EA. It was noted that additional technical studies were completed since the Draft EA was published. These studies were triggered by the access management strategy and include: traffic analysis, aquatic resources, noise impacts, botanical resources, archaeological resources, cultural impacts, and Section 7 Consultation.

The Preferred Alternative is a four lane widening from Keaau to Pahoa. Signals or roundabouts would be constructed at major intersections depending on the construction phase and location. Improvements would be made to turn/storage lanes and median barriers would be installed. Bike and pedestrian accommodations would be installed and bus pullouts would be constructed. Access management strategies would be implemented to create four-way intersections and some streets would be converted to right-in/right-out access.

Questions and Answers

The following questions and comments were received:

1. Comment: Accidents happen at the intersection for Woodland Center.
 - HDOT is developing a roundabout at the intersection of Keaau-Pahoa Road and Old Government Road.
2. How will the project be phased?
 - More details on the phasing will be determined in design, but we are proposing that access management and intersection improvements to come first.
3. What is the process for right-of-way acquisition?
 - HDOT owns a lot of the right-of-way that is needed for the project. The Right-of-Way Division manages title searches, negotiations, and land acquisitions.
4. Comment: I want to see a reduction in the speed limit between Shower Drive and Ainaloa Boulevard.
5. Comment: I don't want a reduction in speed.
6. Comment: Look at Orchidland Drive, Paradise Drive and Ainaloa Boulevard as a system.