

KEAAU-PAHOA ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
KEAAU TO PAHOA
Project No. STP-0130(27)
Public Informational Meeting No. 2

Wednesday, April 29, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.
Pahoa Community Center
Pahoa, Hawaii

PURPOSE:

- Inform the public about the Keaau-Pahoa Advisory Group's effort.
- Identify those who have specific input or a particular perspective on the value of our planning process.
- Receive input and recommendations on our evaluations and development of this project.
- Determine which alternatives the community would like to have studied in greater detail by Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:

Hawaii State Department of Transportation:

Mr. Jiro Sumada, Deputy Director; Nelson Sagum and Dina Lau, Highways Planning; and Stanley Tamura, Robert Taira, Sal Panem, Hawaii District.

SSFM International:

Cheryl Soon, Project Manager; Jo-Anna Herkes, Communication Specialist; Doug Zang, Senior Planner; Heather Forester, Planner; Genevieve Runningwind, Project Coordinator; and Ron Terry, Geometrician.

KPAG MEMBER ATTENDEES:

Hunter Bishop, Fred Blas, Larry Brown, Dan Domizio, Oliver English, Keith Lawrence, Manny Mattos, Emily Naeole, Jon Olson, Wesley Owens, Jennifer Perry, Liz Salfen, and Damon Tucker.

FRIENDS OF THE KPAG:

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|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Steve Hirakami | Gaila Vidunas | Mark Clawson |
| Aden Sprige | Gary Blume | Paula Kekahuna |
| Alice Kavanaugh | Gloria | Peter Sur |
| Angela Manago | Howard Cavace | Rene Siracusa |
| Aulii Mitchell | James Weatherford | Rich Sunden |
| Brady Metcalf | John Callahan | Ryan Evans |
| Brooks Malroe | Jon Reece | Salazar |
| Chas Stanton | Kimo Lee | Sarah Aniban |
| Dave Smith | Lahilahi Verschuur | Sarah Wilkinson |
| Dean Cevallus | Lew Nakamura | Sheri Joy |
| Delan Perry | Madie Greene | Shirley Pedro |
| Devorah Kaplan | Margaret Byrd | Steve utter |
| Diane Gentry | Marie Briuker | Susan Pau |
| Donato Sarahan | Mark Hauanio | Vicki Linter |
| Eliz Weatherford | Marlene Valleriani | Viriginia Asle |
| Erica Johnson | Noe Quihano | Felisa Hanohano |
| Gail Clarke | Oshi Simsarian | |

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

I. Open House Period

Approximately 76 people were present and intently reviewed the exhibits, which included a map of the project corridor for participants to write their comments on.

II. Introduction

Mr. Jiro Sumada, HDOT Highways Deputy Director, opened the formal part of the program, welcomed everyone, introduced the elected official, HDOT staff and other government representatives present, and described the purpose of the meeting.

Ms. Cheryl Soon, SSFM International, Inc., continued the meeting with the PowerPoint presentation of the Context Sensitive Solutions and followed with introductions of Liz Salfen and Wes Owens, two members of the Keau-Pahoa Advisory Group.

It was explained that presentation boards are displayed around the room and each station has a project team member to answer any questions one may have.

Upon conclusion of the formal PowerPoint Presentation, a question and answer period was held.

III. Questions and Answers

Jiro Sumada facilitated the Q&A period.

1. Were commercial developments considered?

Cheryl Soon: The Woodlands Project and Hawaiian Homelands (residential) are those we know of. We do check with the County periodically.

2. If federal highway money is going into this project, it should trigger the need of an EIS instead of an EA.

Ron Terry: This EA is comparable to an EIS. The difference is the number of documents produced. If we find the impacts are significant it may bring on an EIS.

3. Has there been any discussion on pedestrians and crosswalks?

Cheryl Soon: Crosswalks are mandatory at all intersections considered for traffic signals or roundabouts.

4. Suggestion: Please do not consider albizia trees.

Jiro Sumada: Comment noted.

5. The intersection by Malama Market needs to be restudied and reconfigured.

Cheryl Soon: An alternate configuration will be examined as part of the alternatives process. Analysis will be done in the EA. No decisions were made in the advisory group.

6. Do you really expect a child to go a half mile to an intersection, cross over, to go see his friend who lives across the street?

We will take that under consideration during the environmental process.

7. Put up a yellow blinking light near fire department coming into Pahoa and on the other side of Kahakai blvd going out of Pahoa to slow traffic to 25 and warn them of a dangerous intersection.

Comment noted.

8. What's going to be an alternative that HDOT can afford and we can see in our lifetime?

The cost is a factor in the environmental process. The EA will cost out the alternatives.

9. If road designers don't have the foresight, they should not be designing in the first place. They should pay for any expense incurred because of their poor designs. We shouldn't be carrying projects out; we should be getting it done.

Comment noted.

10. When will the project begin? What do we do with the immediate situation? Is there anything in the budget that can be done now that can blend in with what happens in the future?

Jiro Sumada: We currently have a Shoulder Lane Conversion Project in the design stage and will anticipate construction in September 2010. The project will consist of a signal at Shower drive and the addition of a shoulder on the southbound side of the road. They will also be widening the bridge and will convert the northbound shoulder lane to a permanent lane.

Robert Taira: Elaborated on the quick fix, low cost, no cost solutions and additional information regarding the project area.

- *Speed Reductions: Paho-a-bypass will be reduced from 55 to 45. Paho-a-bypass to Keaau rubbish dump speed limit will probably not be reduced to what the public has expressed (45mph). Design speeds are based on geometrics and are requirements.*
- *Striping: Will be done in two weeks weather permitting.*
- *Crosswalks: There are no net safety benefits to putting a crosswalk in a mid block location. Based on studies, this creates many accidents.*
- *Bus stops: We will look into controlling where bus drivers drop off the riders and getting the riders to exit the back of the bus instead of the front. We will see if it is suitable to put in crosswalks at bus stop locations. County's studies on recommendations will come in July 2009.*
- *Paho-a-bypass, Paho-a-Kapoho Road, Kahakai Blvd, and Paho-a Market intersections: Will be taking recommendations on what to do with the particular intersections under Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Program. May need to be folded into environmental study.*
- *Interagency Coordination: We are trying to integrate all programs within the same area.*

11. What is the projected timeline and building options? Please provide more information.

Jiro Sumada: Options and timeline will be detailed in the EA.

Cheryl Soon: Federal Government will not fund anything that doesn't last at least 20 years after it's built. For this project, we are projecting a full build of 2018, done in phases, which will have to last until 2038.

12. Roundabouts are an excellent way to control the amount of cars we have on the highway. They should be considered in this project.

Comment noted.

13. How much is SSFM paid to be a consultant on this project?

Cheryl Soon: The consultant contract with the State including the EA and all engineering design work is just over a million dollars.

14. The fees paid to SSFM covers the meeting we've had as well?

Cheryl Soon: The fee takes it all the way to the completion of the EA process and includes all specialty sub consultants.

15. Where there any other consultants agencies bidding on this project?

Cheryl Soon: The selection of consultants is based on qualifications which are submitted to HDOT annually.

Jiro Sumada: Fees paid to SSFM for environmental portion of design are consistent with the standard for other projects.

16. States should consider safety of residents of Hawaiian Paradise Park. Many people don't use the main highway. They zip through Shower Drive and Paradise Drive to cut through residential roads to go on the shoulder to shower. Making the shoulder a regular lane may increase the danger.

Comment noted.

17. We need an alternate highway. Railroad has too many intersections and not enough right-of-way.

Comment noted.

18. Is TSM cheaper or faster solution?

By definition TSM is a cheaper solution.

Cheryl Soon: No alternative can progress until they are selectively analyzed and prepared.

19. Roundabouts are safe because you only look at the road and only look one way. They may take up space but extra lanes also take up space.

Comment noted.

20. This is similar to the road in Waianae-Makaha area in Oahu. It's very frustrating to stop and go, stop and go on a road with 4 lanes and stop lights. I don't think this is what we want in Puna.

Comment noted.

21. TSMs have been well-thought out and if we can get those going it's a more gentle solution to help us have safer roads faster.

Comment noted.

22. The solution to traffic problems is to provide services where people are. We need to keep focus on bring the services to us.

Comment noted.

23. How many lanes can you fit in a roundabout going in either direction for it to still have an effective traffic pattern?

Jiro Sumada: Primarily one lane in each direction, feeding into a roundabout from however many side streets provides the greatest safety benefits and improvement to the traffic flow to the intersections. Once you get into 2 lanes of traffic in each direction a roundabout gets a little complicated to navigate.

24. Will new intersection or striping provide the left turn pocket lane at Orchidland Drive?

All intersections will be looked at.