

Notes from **Waimea Community Association Meeting**
Thursday 3/3/05 YMCA Kahilu Town Hall 5:30 pm
Riley Smith Pres. and Moderator

Agenda Item: “**\$10 Million South Kohala Road Circulation Project**” with Bruce McClure, Hawaii County Director of Public Works reviews process to evaluate possible alternatives to address regional traffic crisis.

McClure: \$10M set aside by the County Council for a connector road between the area of Mamalahoa highway where the vacuum cooling plant and racetrack is located, and west toward the Waiaka Bridge and Hawaii Prep Academy. One purpose would be to serve as a back up to Lindsey road should that intersection get shut down for any reason, and as second road to get through town. It could be an additional connector for the State bypass road project for Waimea, allowing all through traffic to avoid coming through the town.

Other county funding normally used for road improvements on a district by district basis is the fuel tax for resurfacing. Waimea’s fuel tax allocation is used up so sought other funds for this possible road project which will have public participation. The County has \$500,000 for resurfacing work, possibly Mamalahoa Highway into Waimea, to use before the end of the year.

Audience Question: Who is the consultant and what will they do?

McClure: The consultant is Belt Collins and they will be preparing the EA and EIS, a preliminary engineering report regarding a Kawaihae connector road from Lalamilo for an estimated contract amount of \$250,000. They will study traffic circulation, impacts upon the community, technical requirements, identify alternatives, will have at least 2 public meetings for alternatives developed, and will meet federal county and state guidelines. The County will use its own funds to pay for this work to expedite the process rather than using federal matching funds which could take years to process and implement.

Audience comment: What is the timeline for the design/construction. (Info unavailable).

Audience Comment: This proposal might be premature as an in-depth traffic analysis at different times on different days should first be conducted in order to identify appropriate alternatives. Traffic Safety Committee has been discussing a primary candidate for years. So it shouldn’t be decided up front without back up information; Using Parker Ranch land possibilities should be overlooked. Consultant should get input before pursuing only one project route; connector makes sense but need to look at more than one solution for Waimea’s traffic problems, especially those that address different times of day traffic issues.

Audience Comment: Need Hilo to Kawaihae or Kona connector road to bypass Lindsey and Pukalani roads; should have a connector road that Parker Ranch 20/20 Plan already has identified instead of waiting for Parker Ranch to do its next housing project, which

would require that road, plan together now and possibly with this project.

Audience Comment: \$10M was for community to determine how to spend it; there is a difference between focusing on circulation within town, vs. traffic coming through town; need to know what is the town's main interior circulation patterns by local residents and how can it be helped.

Audience Comment: Main concern is 6 mile bypass will put pressure on more development and increase land prices and ranch will make more money selling the lands. More bypass roads means more development, creating a cycle.

McClure: Mealani to airport is state road with limited access; under discussion is county funding for county roads; HHL cannot subdivide.

Audience Comment: Shouldn't the connector road go to Queen K; what about impact of truck traffic on Kawaihae

McClure: \$10 M will not go all the way to Queen K without duplicating State's work.

Audience Comment: Bypass through the Farmlot road will mean more traffic in the public school area

Audience Comment: What if we ask schools and hotels to stagger times; 30-minute change in start time could spread out traffic.

Audience Comment: Should focus on intersection traffic; back up starts at Kamamalu Road, continue existing multi-lane improvements to Kamamalu Road; PM traffic congestion is at Lindsey Road, eliminate right turn only lane; a new bridge across the Waikoloa stream to connect Church Road to Kapiolani/Lindsey would be a waste of county money as roads are substandard; collector roads have 40' wide requirement and existing street is 16-20' wide; serves as a recreational area

Audience Comment: Object to use of existing Lalamilo farm road; wants to know impact to farmers in Lalamilo

Audience Comment: Suggest a Traffic Impact Analysis based on quantitative data rather than anecdotal examples, as everyone has an opinion based on traffic congestion they encounter.

Audience Comment: \$250K for 12 to 18 months is too cheap.

Audience Comment: Took half an hour to make a left turn from HPA to get back to town at 6 am; studies are all done; we know the traffic intersection in trouble is at the Police Station because 4 lanes reduced to 2 lanes; need to start with widening at Kamamalu land traffic signal adjustments.

Audience Comment: Would be helpful to know how far will \$10M go? How much does a traffic light cost?

McClure: \$10M will take us to the stream; the quick fix is resurfacing as this is exempted from EIS requirements) but widening from 2 to 4 lanes will require an EA/EIS and will take longer.

Kuba: Cost of road with no extras would cost about \$1M per mile

Audience Comment: If Belt Collins can do it for \$250K, should take it; develop left turn lanes especially at the transfer station and where left turns have to be made; widening and traffic light improvements; advertising campaign to drive with aloha.

McClure: State highway starts at Anna's Ranch; need to be aware of what is county vs state roads; different jurisdictions.

Audience Comment: Can do roadwork now and then ask subsequent developers to reimburse the county

Audience Comment: Trucks would be on wrong side of the bridge at Waiauia and it is a state road. Need to resurface Kawaihae road to Anna's ranch vs resurfacing at downtown intersections; Kawaihae road already falling apart

Audience Comment: Morning problems are as bad as afternoon problems; new DHHL housing development will have more than 400 new units which will attract young families with children; need to look at other options to move traffic around town

Audience Comment: Get the most of \$10M with left turns at the police station; widen Mamalahoa Highway and have double left turn lanes.

Audience Comment: Have a moratorium on more development until infrastructure is in place

McClure: Can impose moratorium on re-zoning actions, but at permit level more difficult to due vested rights

Audience Comment: Any data on local vs non-local traffic? Should have that data; build inexpensive local roads to take local traffic off Mamalahoa; shouldn't just move bottlenecks around; should have more affordable housing nearer to employment stations; get houses closer to jobs to eliminate cross island traffic.

Audience Comment: On Kawaihae road, there is a vehicle every 8 seconds almost round the clock, need to know where they are coming from and going to. The association needs to work with focus groups to get ideas and help identify traffic flows.

Audience Comment: Road congestion is not the only issue; need t make community

more pedestrian/bike friendly so can bicycle or walk to grocery store or post office instead of using a car.

Audience Comment: Experience with meetings is that there is lot of talk but nothing happens after that. Can the notes be put together for public circulation so everyone can see what concerns were raised tonight; instead of just going with a plan. Solutions could be simpler; send out to the community members who were not here tonight; put in county newsletter.

Audience Comment: Kamamalu Street have to wait for too long; 200 containers a day at Kawaihae Harbor; need truck and bus lanes Kawaihae road and Waimea town. KTA (Pakalana) light is a problem; pavement needs to be redesigned, pavement failure due to inadequate substructure.

Audience Comment: Consider alternatives to traditional asphalt so have better quality such as what is being used at NELH and Saddle Road

Audience Comment: there was no master plan for infrastructure because the town was never designed to be what it is today. No/poor planning; have to involve Park Ranch, (State (DHHL) and the County; support moratorium and master planning should start now. By Pass road is obsolete; should use Parker Ranch lands where development is anticipated to occur.

By Email (3/3/05): ... The problem of the bottle-neck of traffic is at North Hawaii Community Hospital entrance and not at the intersection of Mamalahoa Hwy and Lindsey Road as most seem to think ... how the 10 million dollars should be spent in improving or eliminating the Traffic problem in Waimea. The following is my comment on the matter. I feel the money could be well spent in improving the existing roadway rather spending it on a roadway that may not be used by all for many years to come. At this time the Roadway from North Hawaii Community Hospital and all the way up to the Old Fukushima Store is wide enough to accommodate a three-lane roadway. Improving this section, and making it a three lane roadway and making it a contra-flow or a zipper type roadway, having two lanes headed from Honoka'a into Waimea in the morning and then changing to two lanes headed in the opposite direction in the afternoon. Having breaks in the blocking for the contra-flow or zipper lanes would allow for traffic to turn off in certain areas ...

By Email (3/7/05): How to invest \$10 million wisely to reduce traffic problems in Waimea.

Priority 1

Develop accurate information on volume, time of day, trucks vs cars and geographic pattern (where are people going?)

Determine where the road can be widened to facilitate:

Right hand pass

Bus loading turn outs

Left turn holding

multiple lanes
Straighten turns
What can be done without EA or EIS including private exchanges/construction with buyouts
Establish priority projects
Time lights better
Critical Targets for follow up by priority and impact
No EIS or EA
Greatest impact on School Hours AM
Back door Bypass to School by building Parker Ranch Bypass with buyback clause
PM Kawaihae to Honoka'a backup
Shift schedule adjustments at Hotels and construction
Routing local circulation away from Mamalahoa i.e. Mana rd behind or through Kuhio Village to Pukalani to Lindsey to Mamalahoa @ vacuum cooler (such as in 3 above)
Time of day only lane, gravel or paved parallel to Dump road to Mamalahoa via Lalamilo farm lots one way in 3 to 6PM only – Cross with a ford and use light signs stating conditions, speed etc (block road with drop gate on Dump end at K road when not in service to minimize impact on farm operations.
Select from lane/turn widening and improvements listed above
Priority 2
Working with State to facilitate bypass around Waimea and Ask DHHL to begin the bypass from Waimea to Kawaihae
Work with Parker Ranch to build any future expansion in a separate Village west of town near PuuPa in a PUD below Waimea along the bypass

Next meeting Thursday April 7, 2005 same location and time.