

CAC Pedestrian Safety Sub-Committee

for the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Sub-committee Chair:
Ken Farm

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MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 10, 2019

Place: 707 Richards Street #200, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Present:

CAC: Ken Farm (Chair), Tom Dinell, Robert Nehmad, Daniel Alexander, Bert Narita, Dolores Mollring

Guests: Jaylene Murakami, Joey Lautermilch, Elizabeth Kincaid, Chris Delaney, John Goody

Staff: Taylor Ellis, Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand

1. Call to Order & Introductions – Ken Farm, Chair

Meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm.

2. Approval of July 9, 2019 meeting minutes

A motion was made by Robert Nehmad and seconded by Tom Dinell. There were no objections and the minutes were accepted as read with the proviso to correct errors in spelling, style, and grammar.

3. New Business

3.1 Early Input for ORTP 2045 and OWP FY2021

Kiana Otsuka, OahuMPO Transportation Planner

Nicki Smith, OahuMPO Planning Program Manager

Nicki Smith reminded that the next annual Overall Work Program cycle is coming up. Every year, OahuMPO programs new planning studies. As part of the process, a call for projects is made to the Policy Board and its advisory committees. Early input is sought from the CAC and this consists of a prioritized list of recommended work elements. The list is shared with the HDOT and DTS. They are invited to educate the CAC about any ongoing studies and proposals that may already be addressing CAC's recommendations.

Kiana Otsuka that there will be a call for projects towards the end of the year. The call will be to partner government agencies and OahuMPO's two advisory committees. Submitted projects will be evaluated to select which ones will be recommended for funding and implementation. She stated that if the CAC feels strongly about pedestrian safety then this should be communicated so that it can be considered when deciding how "safety" will be weighed as a criteria in project selection. She encouraged the group to provide input on project ideas that CAC think should be implemented so that these can be shared with implementing agencies and crafted further.

Q&A, Discussion:

- Ken Farm: Some members may be fixated on projects for their own neighborhoods. Do these projects need to have regional or island-wide effect to be considered or more for long-term planning?

Kiana Otsuka: No, but it is beneficial if they have regional impact. Many ideas coming from the CAC are neighborhood-specific so it might be helpful to ask the implementing agencies whether they are already considering the projects that CAC members have in mind.
- Daniel Alexander: Re: ORTP, what is the most effective way for the CAC to make the ORTP document have more funds for pedestrian safety?

Kiana Otsuka: There is no pedestrian safety-specific pot of money per se but, as mentioned previously, the CAC can weigh in on evaluation criteria for project selection. So this subcommittee and CAC are welcome to provide input on evaluation criteria that is being developed right now. So projects that address pedestrian safety can be weighed higher. You can also comment on the list of projects that the OahuMPO will be receiving. For example, the DOT will have construction projects but the projects titles will to indicate if the project will have pedestrian safety improvement. CAC can ask DOT and DTS about their projects by commenting and making specific pedestrian safety improvement solutions.

Ken Farm: Are there specific languages to use to move agencies to move in that direction.

Kiana Otsuka: This is more thinking along the line of OahuMPO receiving projects for funding. The CAC can comment by asking questions or giving suggestions. These can prompt agencies to consider pedestrian safety improvements.
- Tom Dinell: Under the label “Complete Streets” program, are there projects that the CAC can piggyback on (for pedestrian safety)?

Kiana Otsuka: OahuMPO has not called for projects yet. For current TIP, there is no complete street-specific. The City, however, has a Complete Streets program with current projects. Anytime there are repaving projects, they have to consider complete streets treatment.

Chris Johnson: Construction projects do trigger review of and public comment. All are encouraged to sign up for opportunities to be involved (See “Stay in the Loop” in <http://www.honolulu.gov/completestreets>). Currently, public involvement is sought for Kaneohe complete streets corridor project.
- Tom Dinell: At least one repaving project I know was reviewed but pedestrian safety was not considered. That is, if a repaving project comes up for review, does the review specifically include impact on pedestrian safety?
- Chris Johnson: Pedestrian safety is the goal. For the record, I cannot speak terms of the City’s Complete Streets Program administration. They do and work closely with the Department of Design and Construction, Department of Planning and Permitting, and engineers to make sure that projects are compliant and safe for pedestrians.
- Ken Farm: There has been public resistance about complete streets projects because the public did not know what the City was doing. As projects are coming up, the question is whether the public is being informed. In the past, DTS contacted neighborhood board or its chair only. There have been adding and removing of crosswalks in the name of pedestrian safety and more things happen after removal of the crosswalks. As projects are coming up, there has to be public input and understanding of that process
- Chris Johnson: I can say that the goal of the Complete Streets program is to continue to have a more co-creative and collaborative development process with communities and a process that reflects community input and values better.

- Joe Francher: If there is federal fund involved, at some point we would see it through the OahuMPO package. We probably had input in reconstruction projects if they have been in previous TIPs. If future projects that required federal-funds would come before us through future TIP, it would be in these projects that we can express our concerns about pedestrian safety.
- _____: The question is, when the City goes to rebuild or renew roads, does it then go and re-evaluate context as a matter of policy (e.g., revisit speed limit of that road).
- Nicki Smith encouraged everyone is encouraged to review the details of OWP FY2020, specifically the proposed DTS Vision Zero Action Plan. The Plan seeks to eliminate traffic death with a very data-drive process; high crash streets identified will be prioritized; the interactive data will be available online; legislative and design recommendations included.

3.2 Pedestrian Safety: A Community Perspective

David Aki, CAC member

David Aki, as a member of the CAC, has a unique vantage about pedestrian safety. He is a veteran driver of Honolulu's TheBus and retired after 41 years of service. He noted that dying on our streets has become a norm in the last year and a half. He pointed out that it is only when one finds a personal stake that one is driven to respond to the issue.

He is presenting at this meeting to tell everyone that there are 20 bus drivers with more than 45 years of experience each. They have a unique knowledge of our streets as they go through our streets five times a week and about 10 times day. They can tell where the hotspots are and where they can happen. Majority of these drivers live in the communities where they drive around. He said that they can help and it will be a shame not to ask them. He thinks that we cannot go on as usual and have to think outside the box. He has the perspective that if we take care of the babies and the elders, we will be able to take care of everyone in between.

He recalled that bus drivers complete a safety training every year. He reported that the bus companies stopped provided this eight years ago. Today, although training is meant to be a preventive measure, drivers are only required to undergo training after the fact (i.e. accident/crash). He stated that at the end of the day, it is not about schedules but about going home and making sure that we do not kill anybody on our streets while driving.

He hoped that he was getting his message across about asking the top and most veterans of TheBus drivers for information about Oahu's streets.

Q&A, Discussion:

- Re: bus companies not providing training anymore. Are drivers unionized at all? Per David Aki, drivers were unionized 33 years ago. Training was a federal mandate a long time ago and does not know where training funds have gone.
- Is it possible to get training? Per David Aki, the Teamsters is a member of the CAC and represents the TheBus employees. The question can be directed to the Teamsters.
- Is it the opinion of the veteran drivers with 40+ years of experience that drivers today must get the training? Per David Aki, it is important to have annual training. Even the best of us forget so annual refresher course is important. There are many things coming up with many moving parts (e.g. 4000 to 5000 homes coming up in Ewa, one way in and out to homes; more bike lanes) and we have to preach and address safety. All need to be in sync.

- Who should be contacted to reach the 20 bus drivers for more formal research to gather data from the 40 veteran drivers? David Aki offered that he can be reached by phone.
- Tom Dinell recommended that the Subcommittee formally ask more about safety training (or lack of) from authorities.

3.3 Connecting the Dots (Moving Forward for Desired Impact)

Ken Farm, Chair

Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand, OahuMPO Community Planner

Ken Farm asked about mapping exercise. Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand said that the point of a mapping exercise is to recognize that the subcommittee has offered perspectives, concepts, and ideas (e.g. from having more trees to better educational outreach). These thoughts should be organized so that they can technically be connected to other policies, programs, and initiatives. She said that it is for this reason that the ORTP and OWP are in today's agenda as well as the Vision Zero resolution draft. Part of that is studying and understanding what other MPOs do and finding what OahuMPO might want to consider.

References on other MPOs:

Transportation Safety Planning and the Zero Deaths Vision: A Guide for Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Local Communities

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/tsp/fhwsa18024/MPOLocalSafetyPlanGuide_508compliant.pdf

2) Centering Safety at MPOs

https://visionzeronet.org/mpo_safety/

Responding to the discussions in the above references, Ken Farm reiterated the need for any mandate or policy idea from elsewhere to be meaningful to our communities. For example, most people and leaders in our community do not know what Vision Zero means and this situation is the big challenge when adopting Vision Zero. He reiterated the need for shared definitions and understanding, particularly at the grassroots. He says that we can all agree about "establishing and fostering a culture of safety" but this is still vague in terms of how we can create that culture in ways that fit Hawaii and our different communities. Another area is "enforcement." He referred to the recent crosswalk law that clarified what pedestrians are to do when they see the red light flashing. He said that the presence of the law (e.g. penalty via fine) do not always bring about the desired behavior. People must have a personal stake and buy-in.

Ken Farm shared FHWA videos on safety. These were offered by OahuMPO transportation planner, Diane Dohm. Two were shown at this meeting:

1. Raised crosswalks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSVMJ7HALOI&list=PL5_sm9g9d4T3l4Co020jzSf022naHKwox&index=3

2. Crosswalk visibility enhancement

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzGj3UWB83M&list=PL5_sm9g9d4T3l4Co020jzSf022naHKwox&index=5

These are examples of solutions that will work or not work depending on implementation contexts.

3.4 Recommendations for CAC and Other Actions

Led by Ken Farm, chair

The discussion continued from 3.3. Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand explained that, as a community planner, her role is to help this subcommittee and CAC be relevant in policy board decision-making. On this matter, “timing” and “timely” input are key. Also, it is a good to know what can be addressed via OahuMPO work products and what has to be directed elsewhere. The State and the City governments have already adopted a Vision Zero policy. So an OahuMPO resolution on Vision Zero must capture the subcommittee or CAC’s voice. For example, Vision Zero calls for data-driven solution and this subcommittee is stressing the need to gather information and opinions of from the different communities.

Q&A, Discussion from previous topic:

- Tom Dinell: Is this resolution going to the Policy Board? Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand said that at the end of the day, the subcommittee input will go to the CAC and CAC will give feedback to the Policy Board. The Policy Board makes the decision.
- Tom Dinell: Vision Zero will provide the general overall framework that we need, both as a subcommittee and as CAC needs as a guidance document. It will not address specifics but it provides the umbrella framework that we do not have at present. We fit specific actions within that framework
- Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand: Other initiatives pave safety as elements, too. Vision Zero is different in that it is the policy that puts the culture of safety in the center. MPOs can encourage coordination and alignment of plans and action for synergistic results.
- Daniel Alexander: Vision Zero can be embedded in all relevant plans,
- Ken Farm: Have an idea of what other MPOs and how they input Vision Zero in their communities, areas, and culture.
- Daniel Alexander: The current draft resolution looks good. #8 needs to be stronger in terms of how the principles of Vision Zero are integrated in the ORTP, TIP and other documents that OahuMPO control. There should be more substance on how Vision Zero will be integrated.
- Tom Dinell: It will be useful if we can come back at our next meeting with a draft of resolution so we can adopt and recommend it to the CAC. It is recommended that staff provide the initial draft that incorporates our input to date. We can comment and edit from there.
- Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand: In our internal calendar, the Vision Zero resolution will be taken up in the September meeting of the TAC, CAC and Policy Board. So, in terms of timing, it is best for this subcommittee to have a position before the September 18 meeting. Members can call, email, and send their ideas and thoughts as soon as possible.
- Chris Johnson: There are three elements that is being talked about that sets apart Vision Zero as a framework. 1) Data is really important. This refers not only to crash data but other information like living experiences (The information from bus drivers fall under this); 2) Multi-disciplinary- It is not the responsibility of transportation entities alone. Stakeholders will include health, police, procurement and others.; 3) Shift from compliance-thinking to resilience-thinking, e.g. designing the built environment to keep people from speeding vs. enforcing speed limits via fines to motivate behavior.

- Robert Nehmad. There are limits to the idea of reducing speed limits as a solution. Dinell and Johnson chimed in that speed reduction is sought in city streets (e.g. narrowing lanes, having more trees, reducing speed limits) not in highways. Vision Zero encourages deeper questions like why do we build cities where the only choice of transportation is a car.
- Daniel Alexander: OahuMPO is a resource in looking at the long-term, including funding.
- Joe Francher: It is critical to have Vision Zero in counteracting years of bad conditions and lack of maintenance of roads, etc.
- Joey Lautermilch: I am not a technical expert. I am a pedestrian. I want to hear more details about Vision Zero. I feel I know a lot about pedestrian experience and I just want to know what can really be done to make it easier for pedestrians. How can we fix unsafe conditions and prevent harm.
- Robert Nehmad: The resolution may not be for the details that we are looking for but we should look forward to the day that no one is killed or injured on our streets. Whether you are an architect, engineer, pedestrian or others, Let us at least have a common vision. Let's have everyone in the island agree on that. Then we can work the details later.
- Elizabeth Kincaid: Great ideas. I would like to see tangible and actually see happening (e.g. raised crosswalks, lights and little things that can get us to that goal).
- Tom Dinell: Moving forward will not necessarily be neatly systematic. There is a whole slew of individual actions that need to be fitted in the big picture.
- Jaylene Murakami. It is good to point out that it is not just transportation departments. I agree with the role of the built environment in pedestrian safety.
- Chris Delaney (PRP). It is his first time at meeting like this one and he focuses more on housing development. It is a good partnership that while we are building, e.g. affordable housing, we can find ways to work together and make pedestrians safe.
- AARP. There is great opportunity to improve Vision Zero. It is data-driven and we need to identify the kinds of information and data that will help.
- Logan Takeda: People can start doing more but talking to their families and friends about Vision Zero. Plant the seed in the heads of many and get the word out.
- Ken Farm: Key takeaways include the idea of resilience versus compliance. We spend a lot of time on consequences rather than looking at ways to modify the environment, (address by) prevention rather than after the fact.

4. Invitation to interested members of the public to be heard on matters not Included on the Agenda
Ken Farm recommended a tour of the Joint Traffic Management Center to further understand its role in pedestrian safety. Ken will make some phone calls.

5. Announcements

Chris Johnson asked if everyone have Holo cards already. He encouraged all to learn more about it via web information. <https://www.holocard.net/>

6. Announcement of next scheduled meeting.

September 10, 2019, same time and venue

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Note: Bert Narita mentioned after the meeting that some voices were muffled and could not be heard.

Ken Farm, Chair

Date

Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand, Recorder

Date