

Minutes of the
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 14, 2011, 1:30 p.m.
Council Committee Meeting Room 205
530 South King Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

Members Present:

Councilmember Breene Harimoto, Chair		Representative Marilyn Lee
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair		Senator Will Espero
Councilmember Romy Cachola		DOT Director Glenn Okimoto
Councilmember Ann Kobayashi		DTS Director Wayne Yoshioka
Councilmember Ernest Martin		

Member(s) Absent: Councilmember Stanley Chang, Representative Joseph Souki, Representative Karen Awana, and Senator J. Kalani English

Guests Present:

Kimberly Ribellia (CM Martin)		Joseph Magaldi, Jr. (Committee for
Melvin Kaku (DEM Director)		Balanced Transportation, CAC)
Virginia Bisho (DTS)		Tom Smyth (NB #13, CAC)
Elizabeth Fischer (FHWA, TAC ex officio)		Mike Golojuch (NB #34, CAC)
		Kevin Killeen (resident)

OahuMPO Staff Present: Brian Gibson, Marian Yasuda, Pamela Toyooka

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. by Chair Breene Harimoto. A quorum was present.

I. MINUTES OF THE MAY 10, 2011 MEETING

There being no objections, the minutes for the May 10, 2011 meeting – Open and Executive Sessions – were accepted as circulated.

II. CONSIDER FY 2012 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM

Handouts: Draft FY 2012 Overall Work Program (OWP), FY 2012 OWP Public Review Comment Summary, FY 2012 OWP Intergovernmental Review Comment Summary

Executive Director Brian Gibson gave a presentation on the draft FY 2012 OWP – including the intergovernmental and public review comments, and the Technical Advisory Committee recommendation. Director Gibson noted that there was an error in the Development Process slide for April 2011; the draft OWP was not presented to the Policy Committee at that time.

During the presentation of public comments received, Director Gibson stated that the Waikiki Improvement Association had submitted a comment suggesting that the scope of the Waikiki Regional Circulator Study (FY 2011) be expanded to address all modes of transportation, with an emphasis on pedestrians. Department of Transportation Services (DTS) Director Wayne Yoshioka responded that they would not be expanding the scope of the project.

Director Gibson explained that the City Council needs to take action before City work elements (WE) may be included in the OWP; Council is scheduled to take this action on WE 201.01-12 (Traffic Signal Prioritization Methodology) and 206.01-12 (Emergency Evacuation Plan) at their July meeting. Director Gibson requested that the FY 2012 OWP be approved; and WEs 201.01-12 and 206.01-12 be approved contingent upon City Council approval in July.

Director Yoshioka stated that he wanted to amend the text in WE 201.01-12, since the current wording is unsatisfactory. Copies were made of the suggested written changes for members to review.

Director Yoshioka stated WE 205.03-12 (Neighborhood Mobility Review) should be deferred until FY 2013. It would be premature to do this study, since DTS is currently working with the City Council Transportation Committee and AARP (including the umbrella organization called One Voice for Livable Islands) to formulate a Complete Streets policy for the City and County of Honolulu. This policy should first be established by the Transportation Committee, then adopted by the full Council, before this type of study is done. To be productive, this study would need to select a neighborhood somewhere; and this neighborhood would likely be all City streets. So, this study should be done by the City, rather than as an OahuMPO-administered study, since the City streets are under the purview of the City and County of Honolulu. Director Yoshioka stated that the DTS is in full support of Complete Streets; DTS would be glad to do this type of study once the Complete Streets policy is in place.

Chair Harimoto agreed with Director Yoshioka. Representative Marilyn Lee stated that Director Yoshioka is the expert. She noted that Director Yoshioka had attended the neighborhood board meeting in her area last month and was able to explain many things that the general public does not understand; his recommendation should be taken very seriously.

Director Yoshioka moved and Councilmember Ernest Martin seconded that WE 205.03-12 be deferred until the FY 2013 OWP and until the City Council enacts a Complete Streets Policy for Honolulu. There being no objections, the motion was unanimously carried.

Senator Will Espero asked if WE 206.01-12 would include private road access, including dirt roads and cane haul roads. Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Director Melvin Kaku responded that the intent is to look at all potentially available sources to route the community to safe zones. DEM would like to have defined mutual agreements that would allow these private roads to be utilized, in the interest of public safety, in an emergency condition.

With regard to WE 201.01-12, Senator Espero stated that, in his area and any other developing area, the issue is warranted or non-warranted. There's a raging debate about whether crosswalks or traffic signals are warranted. Senator Espero gave some examples of streets in his area.

Director Yoshioka stated that this issue will be addressed in the study. In the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), there are various ways to warrant traffic signals, with the most common way being a volume warrant. There is some reluctance on the part of the City, other counties, and State staff to use other warrants, because they are not as quantitative in their measure. Because of that, if there is not rigorous methodology to work those warrants; it is sometimes difficult to defend in court. The whole purpose of this prioritization is to better setup the mechanism, so that DTS can more fully use the range of warrants that are available through the MUTCD. DTS will not put in unwarranted traffic signals. Having a better methodology will make DTS more fully able to use all the different warrants that are available in the MUTCD.

Senator Espero asked if there was a way to look at the number of accidents. Director Yoshioka responded in the affirmative; however, he noted that is one of the warrants DTS doesn't like to use, because you have to have a catastrophe before it's warranted. Senator Espero responded that there are already catastrophes happening – one being at Fort Weaver Road, next to Oceane Pointe Shopping Center. Director Yoshioka stated that there is an accident warrant in the MUTCD. When the analysis is done, they need to show that installation of a traffic signal will mitigate those types of accidents; the number of accidents would not necessarily warrant a signal.

Senator Espero asked if a fatality would help justify a traffic signal; a student had to die on Fort Weaver Road before he could get a traffic signal there. Director Yoshioka noted that he was uncomfortable addressing this particular instance, since this road is not under the City's jurisdiction.

Director Yoshioka stated that, bottom line, the refinement of the methodology will make it easier to use more of the different warrant possibilities that are in the MUTCD. It will also make it more comfortable for those who are charged with running through these methodologies and making sure those warrants are satisfied and the analyses are done. They can more clearly show how the warrants apply; it makes them more comfortable in using a wider range of these warrants.

Director Yoshioka went over some warrants. The most common is the volume warrant. If there is a school there, then a school crossing warrant can be used. Pedestrian warrants are difficult, since you have to have a lot of pedestrians to meet the pedestrian warrant; almost like Downtown or Waikiki.

In response to Senator Espero, Director Yoshioka responded that, rather than distance from a school, it is more the influence area; whether there are school-bound children using that crossing. Senator Espero asked about the massive intersection at Keoneula Boulevard and Kapolei Parkway. Director Yoshioka noted that this intersection is under the City's jurisdiction. There is a signal design underway right now; as soon as the signal design is completed, a signal will be installed there.

Representative Lee stated that she was happy to see that the Central Mauka Road and the Mililani Rail Spur Feasibility Studies are being thought of as possible future planning projects (as part of the illustrative list of projects). However, she would like them to be included in the FY 2012 OWP. She stated that the three neighborhood boards in her area are having a very intense

discussion about what they see as a lack attention to the Central Oahu traffic problems. Two other very important projects are the Wahiawa Second Access Road and the Paiawa Street Extension.

Representative Lee asked if any of these projects could be added to the FY 2012 OWP. Director Gibson responded that, with the deferral of WE 205.03-12, the funds budgeted for that project will now be available. Director Gibson added that the FY 2012 OWP would first have to be approved, then it would have to be amended to include the new project, since the public has not had a chance to review and comment on the project.

Representative Lee asked if the study could be added to the FY 2013 illustrative list until it goes through the public review. Director Gibson responded in the affirmative.

Representative Lee moved and Senator Espero seconded that the Paiwa Street Extension and Wahiawa Second Access Road be added to the illustrative list as a future planning project. The motion was unanimously carried.

Director Yoshioka requested that the following verbiage changes be made to WE 201.01-12 (additions underlined and deletions struck out):

- Under Objectives: “Prepare study to: 1. ~~Establish a~~ Refine the existing criteria/method for the prioritization of traffic signals ~~after the signals become warranted~~ installation. 2. ~~Recommend a~~ Refine the methodology for the location and installation of prioritized warranted traffic signals.”
- Under Work Products (first bullet): “~~Establish a~~ Refine the existing system for a given criteria to be used to prioritize the installation of traffic signals and pedestrian signal upgrades”
- Under Description (first bullet): “Conduct a survey of other prioritization systems used ~~in other states~~: 3 months”
- Under Project Justification (sentences 2 & 3): “This system, will ~~replace~~ refine the ~~sometimes subjective~~ method currently in use. ~~Replacing~~ Refining the current method will increase public confidence and ~~department credibility~~. ~~An objective system will better withstand legal challenges that may arise. in disputing signal prioritization methods.~~”

In response to Chair Harimoto, Director Gibson stated the changes proposed by Director Yoshioka were not substantial, so he had no problem with the Policy Committee approving the changes without doing a formal amendment.

Director Yoshioka moved and Vice Chair Fukunaga seconded that the text to WE 201.01-12 be amended to incorporate the changes proposed by Director Yoshioka. The motion was unanimously carried.

There being no objections, the FY 2012 OWP was approved.

Representative Lee moved and Councilmember Martin seconded that the Central Mauka Road and Mililani Rail Spur Feasibility Study be included in the FY 2012 OWP after a public hearing.

Representative Lee asked Director Gibson if this is the most appropriate motion. Director Gibson responded that the most appropriate thing to do would be to make a motion to amend the FY 2012 OWP to include the study; then staff will go through the normal amendment process.

Representative Lee agreed to change the wording of her motion to match what Director Gibson had recommended – that the FY 2012 OWP be amended to include the Central Mauka Road and Mililani Rail Spur Feasibility Study; then the staff be instructed to go through the normal amendment process. There being no objections, the motion was unanimously carried.

III. CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

CAC Chair Michael Golojuch summarized the last CAC meeting.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS (ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLY)

Representative Lee stated that that three Central Oahu neighborhood boards would like to give a PowerPoint presentation to the members. So, she suggested that this presentation be added as an agenda item to the July 5th Policy Committee meeting.

Elizabeth Fischer announced that the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration will be holding a planning Certification Review of OahuMPO on June 28-30. As part of this review, there will be a public meeting at 5:00 p.m. on June 28 in the State Capitol Auditorium where the public may give their comments on OahuMPO.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:24 p.m.