

Minutes of the
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 21, 2011, 3:30 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325
415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

Members Present:

Representative Marilyn Lee, Chair		Representative Karen Awana
Councilmember Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair		Representative Joseph Souki
Councilmember Tom Berg		Senator Will Espero
Councilmember Romy Cachola		Senator Carol Fukunaga
Councilmember Stanley Chang		DTS Director Wayne Yoshioka

Member(s) Absent: Councilmember Nestor Garcia, Senator J. Kalani English, and DOT Director Glenn Okimoto

Guests Present:

Kyle Dowd (CM Cachola)		Mary Lou Kobayashi (DBEDT-OP, TAC)
Jame Schaedel (staff, House of Representatives)		Felipe Zubia (ReSEED Advisors)

OahuMPO Staff Present: Brian Gibson, Randolph Sykes, Pamela Toyooka

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m. by Chair Marilyn Lee. A quorum was present. Chair Lee noted that this was an abbreviated meeting with time-sensitive materials and actions.

I. FORWARD FY 2013 PLANNING PRIORITIES FROM THE CAC AND OAHUMPO STAFF TO PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Handout(s): OahuMPO Staff & Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) FY 2013 Planning Priorities

OahuMPO Executive Director Brian Gibson stated that he gave a presentation on the OahuMPO Staff and Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) FY 2013 Planning Priorities at the September 6, 2011 meeting. However, he failed to request that the Policy Committee approve transmittal of the CAC's planning priorities to the participating agencies for their consideration.

Vice Chair Breene Harimoto moved and Representative Karen Awana seconded that the CAC's FY 2013 Planning Priorities be transmitted to the participating agencies for their consideration. The motion was unanimously carried.

II. CONSIDER LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HUD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES REGIONAL PLANNING GRANT

Director Gibson gave a presentation on the proposed Statewide Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. OahuMPO has been asked to support and

participate in the grant. The University of Hawaii (UH) is the prospective grantee and the counties would be the subgrantees. The grant would be for \$5 million, with each subgrantee receiving \$500,000 to complete any long-range planning that ties into the overall Statewide Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan. The local match for Oahu has already been identified, so, for Oahu, the sub-grant would be “free”. The multi-jurisdictional consortium will steer the Statewide projects. If the Policy Committee agrees to participate in the grant application, OahuMPO would be the Oahu county organization on the consortium. If so, OahuMPO would need to provide a letter of support and commitment to collaborate and apply for this grant.

Senator Carol Fukunaga moved and Vice Chair Harimoto moved that the Policy Committee sign a letter of commitment for application of the Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant.

Questions and Answers

Felipe Zubia, of ReSEED Advisors, stated that UH is the lead grantee for the purposes of the grant. This is the second round of the program through HUD. The language has changed since the first round; they are now encouraging more educational institution involvement. An organization with a Statewide presence is needed; UH included a community college system that is Statewide. Mr. Zubia noted that they also approached Jesse Souki of the Office of Planning (OP) about taking the lead in this effort. However, Mr. Souki had concerns regarding staffing and existing projects. Also, OP could not come up with the 20% match needed for this grant.

Representative Souki stated that he did not feel that UH should be the lead grantee in this effort. Also, he did not feel that it is the role of the OP to head this type of effort. Representative Souki stated that the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) or the Hawaii Housing Finance & Development Corporation (HHFDC) both have more of a Statewide impact than UH; UH has a different mission.

Mr. Zubia added that DBEDT Director Richard Lim was also approached about this. In addition, they also met with Lieutenant (Lt.) Governor Brian Schatz, since the support of the Governor is needed. The Governor will decide which Statewide organization will participate.

In response to Representative Souki, Mr. Zubia stated that UH is already the lead agency in this effort, since fiscal and administrative agents needed to be identified for the grant application. UH is not the decision-making body for the direction of the grant; the decision-making will be made by the consortium.

Department of Transportation Services (DTS) Director Wayne Yoshioka asked if Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) was aware of this grant. Director Gibson responded that DPP was part of the project early on; however, they did not have the staff time to commit to the project. In response to Director Yoshioka, Mr. Gibson stated that DPP Deputy Director Jiro Sumada was asked about his feelings if OahuMPO stepped in as the Oahu subgrantee. Director Gibson stated that Deputy Director Sumada was very supportive of OahuMPO stepping in.

Director Yoshioka asked how the Oahu community organization will be selected. Director Gibson did not know how that would be done.

Director Yoshioka asked about the local matching funds needed for Oahu. Director Gibson responded that the local cash match for Oahu is already being provided via UH. OahuMPO would not need to provide a local match. As part of the consortium, OahuMPO staff would need to commit staff time to the consortium and would lead the Oahu subgrantee project. In response to Director Yoshioka, Director Gibson stated that, with regard to the Overall Work Program, there would be no request from the participating agencies for funds or staff time for this effort.

In response to Councilmember Cachola, Mr. Zubia stated that the other counties have already identified their non-federal funds for their local match. UH is contributing the non-federal match for Oahu.

In response to Councilmember Cachola, Mr. Zubia stated that it is critical to have the Island of Oahu's participation in some form, or the grant application is dead. So, it was decided to include OahuMPO without requiring a match from them.

Senator Espero asked how \$3 million available to the Statewide consortium would be spent. Mr. Zubia stated that, in the grant application, prospective projects needed to be identified. The consortium would then rank the projects.

In response to Senator Espero, Mr. Zubia stated that the Department of Urban and Regional Planning is the lead UH department for the consortium. Mr. Zubia noted that UH would be doing the administrative functions, but would not be directing the plan itself.

In response to Senator Espero, Mr. Zubia stated that, once the grant is awarded, then the consortium would setup the bylaws.

In response to Vice Chair Harimoto. Mr. Zubia spoke about his background, his previous work experience with Hawaii County, and his grant administering experience in the first round. In the first round, Kauai originally applied for the grant, but did not get it because the grant is intended for a region; there needs to be multiple jurisdictions involved. For the second round, ReSEED Advisors approached the counties and the State about applying for the grant.

Vice Chair Harimoto asked how it was agreed upon that UH would be the lead and fiscal agent. Mr. Zubia responded that the State Administration was not able to take on the role, so UH agreed to take it on role.

In response to Vice Chair Harimoto, Mr. Zubia stated that the other counties would only provide a minimal share – \$22,000 a year or \$66,000 for three years. It was recognized by all the other counties that, without Oahu, the grant was dead; so, no one will object to Oahu not providing it's local match.

Vice Chair Harimoto stated that he was concerned that the City and County of Honolulu is not represented on this consortium. Approaching the Deputy Director of one City agency is not sufficient; one Deputy Director for one agency should not be making the decision for the entire City. The Mayor of Honolulu or the Managing Director should have also been approached. Mr.

Zubia responded that they did not want to press the issue because of the timing of grant application, which is due on October 6th. Once the Policy Committee gives their letter of support, with the help of the OahuMPO, they would like to offer the City and County of Honolulu – be it the Mayor or someone else – at least a seat on the consortium. If they don't have the staff time to manage the grant funding, at minimum, it would be helpful to have them on the consortium.

Director Yoshioka asked what the significance of the products that would come out of this effort would be and how the products coming out of this effort will be used. Mr. Zubia responded that the products would be on a Statewide basis – a coordinated Statewide sustainability plan that addresses transportation, affordable housing, and mobility issues. For the counties, it would be separate from the Statewide process.

Councilmember Cachola stated that having so many organization involved muddies the waters. Mr. Zubia responded that number of organizations on the consortium were kept to a minimum. Some areas have 20-30 organizations on their consortiums.

In response to Councilmember Cachola, Mr. Zubia stated that the effort would be maximized by using UH resources – using UH graduates students to do research would keep the cost low.

Director Gibson stated that the Oahu subgrantee project would supplement the work OahuMPO staff already has to do for the long-range transportation plan.

In response to Senator Espero, Mr. Zubia stated that UH would get \$2 million to administer the grant and for providing the graduate students. UH would use their \$2 million to do what the consortium wants. The counties would split \$2 million – \$500,000 per county – to do their projects. The various private consultants, which include ReSEED Advisors and Kanu Hawaii, would split \$1 million. In response to Representative Karen Awana, Mr. Zubia stated that each county would spend their funds differently.

Chair Marilyn Lee asked why the Policy Committee had not heard about this before. Mr. Zubia stated that this was a quick process; the consultant has been working on it for three weeks. In the pre-application process, the State received approval on September 6.

Vice Chair Harimoto stated that he had many concerns about this and wanted to state for the record that he was uncomfortable with this effort.

Councilmember Cachola suggested that the distribution of funds be changed to \$1 million to each county, \$500,000 to UH, and \$500,000 to the consultants. Senator Espero suggested that distribution of funds be changed to \$1 million to UH, \$3 million to the counties, and \$1 million to the consultants. Mr. Zubia stated that, once the consortium is formed, then they can discuss how the grant is distributed. He also recommended that, if any change is made to the distribution, the county distribution should be kept even across the counties and OahuMPO.

Chair Lee read the motion: To send a letter of support for the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant.

In response to Councilmember Cachola regarding a deferral of the vote, Director Gibson stated that the application is not fully developed, so there is still work to be done prior to the submission deadline.

In response to Chair Lee and Senator Espero, Mr. Zubia stated that the Policy Committee can amend the motion to have the consortium discuss the distribution of the grant once the grant is awarded.

Representative Souki called for the question.

Councilmember Cachola stated that he had a problem with having the community organizations on the list of the consortium not specified and only lists as "...*Community Organization(s)*".

A vote was taken. The motion passed with seven (7) in favor and three (3) opposed (Berg, Cachola, & Harimoto).

Chair Lee stated that coming to Policy Committee this late in the process should be avoided in the future.

III. OTHER BUSINESS (ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLY)

Councilmember Berg distributed a Council resolution to urge the State Legislature and the Governor to authorize the City to impose a County surcharge to the general excise tax for highway and bikeway construction. He requested that this be included as a future Policy Committee agenda item.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.